

THE
First Three
Christian Centuries

CHURCH HISTORY

from

A. D. 1 to A. D. 313

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THE

First Three
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A HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, WITH
A SPECIAL VIEW TO THE DELINEATION
OF CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE.

(FROM A.D. 1 TO A.D. 313.)

By

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1884.

P R E F A C E.



MY aim in the following pages has been to present, PREFACE.
within a comparatively moderate compass, the results of the most mature investigations into the history and life of the early Church, in a form at once solid and popular, and thus to produce a work suited alike to the purposes of closet study and of general Christian edification.

With this view, I have adopted the following method: *First*, I have excluded from the main body of the work all such minute details of theological sects and controversies as are necessarily unintelligible and repulsive to general readers, referring the student to a full Appendix at the close, chiefly from approved writers, for ampler information on special points; and, *secondly*, I have sought to enrich and enliven the meagre detail of ecclesiastical events and names with such graphic notices of Christian faith and manners, and such glimpses into the inner life of that old time, as are usually presented in a separate form, but which constitute, in truth, the very soul of Christian history. As examples of what I mean, I may refer to the account of the "Church in the Catacombs," in the third

PREFACE. chapter of the second Period ; the blending of biographical incident with the history of doctrines, in the fourth; and the picture of Christian life and manners during the Martyr Age, in the fifth.

The authorities I have chiefly used throughout, besides such original sources as were open to me, are, for general Church history, Neander, Gieseler, Kurtz, Guerike, Hase, Schaff, Alexander (New York), Merle d'Aubigné, and the other writers of the "Séances Historiques," Milman, Burton; for doctrine-history, Hagenbach and Neander; for Christian antiquities, Riddle and Coleman; and for information on special points connected with the life of the early Church, Conybeare and Howson's "Life and Epistles of St. Paul," Taylor's "Ancient Christianity," and Bunsen's "Hippolytus and his Times," and "Analecta Ante-Nicæna." Where I have only adopted the generally received results of the best writers, I have avoided the parade of needless references; on special matters of doubtful controversy, I have either quoted my authority or pointed to the sources of fuller information.

On the much agitated question of the primitive form of Church government I have avoided all discussion. The catholic design of the work excluded a controversy in regard to which the great body of orthodox Protestants are so much divided, and which, besides, is much better studied in works expressly devoted to its consideration, than in a general history of the Church.

In looking along the whole course of the Church's earthly life, it has seemed to me that it might be

most fitly arranged under the following natural periods, PREFACE.
namely :—

- I. The *Apostolic Church* (from the Advent of Christ to the death of St. John).
- II. The *Martyr Church* (from the death of St. John to the edict of Milan in A.D. 313).
- III. The *Imperial Church* (from the edict of Milan to the fall of the Western Roman Empire).
- IV. The *Mediæval Church* (from the fall of the Western Empire to the Reformation).
- V. The *Modern Church* (from the Reformation to the present time).

The present volume, it will thus be seen, embraces only a part of a larger plan; at the same time, the period to which it refers, constituting the great formative age of the Church, is a subject in itself so complete and unique, that its history may well be considered as a separate and independent whole.

The Chronological Tables of ecclesiastical and contemporary history appended to each Period, the Synoptical Chart of ante-Nicene theology, on page 287, and the Examination Questions at the close of the volume, will be acceptable to those who wish to test their knowledge, and secure a thorough mastery of the whole course of events and opinions during the first Christian centuries.

I. B.

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THE
FIRST THREE CHRISTIAN CENTURIES.

CHURCH HISTORY FROM A.D. 1 TO A.D. 313.

INTRODUCTION.

THE WORLD BEFORE CHRIST.

THE central point of all time and of all history is the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh. With his advent closed the old world and began the new. In it the course of the ages at once reached its first great landing-place, and started on another and grander career. For that event all the past had been preparing, and from it all the future was to spring. It was the ripened fruit of the one, the pregnant and ever-fruitful germ of the other. The mysterious birth in Bethlehem's manger imparted at last to the world's life that divine leaven which had been from the first preparing, and from that moment began that process of living and life-giving fermentation which has ever since been making all things new, and which will continue on from age to age until the whole is leavened.

The central point of history

The preparation thus made for the coming of the Saviour was twofold, and came from quarters the most widely separated from one another. The one was the work of heathenism, the other of Judaism; the one of

Preparation for the advent.

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unaided nature under the guidance only of a general superintending Providence, the other of renewed nature under a special and supernatural economy of grace. Human culture and divine power each contributed their part in preparing the way for a religion which, like its Author, should be at once human and divine,—a graft of heavenly and uncreated life inserted in a stock of earth. While both, however, worked together toward the same end, they did so in widely different ways. It was the function of heathenism mainly to reveal man's need—of Judaism, God's mercy. In the one we behold the creature feebly groping after the Creator,—in the other the Creator, by grand successive stages, drawing near to the creature. The one raised ever more and more terribly the great problem,—the other prepared the solution of it. The one was the cry of nature,—the other the response, waxing clearer and clearer as ages passed, of divine grace. Thus, by a mysterious and wonderful arrangement of Providence, while all over the wide field of the world the soil is being prepared for the seed, in a little spot of chosen ground the divine seed is ripening for the soil. From the day of the fall to the day of the advent, God had been preparing the world for salvation, and preparing salvation for the world.

Heathen-
ism.

I. The preparatory influence of HEATHENISM was, as we have already remarked, chiefly negative. It was important, not so much for what it found, as for what it sought for in vain. Much as it contributed, at an after stage, by its high intellectual and scientific culture to give form and system to the divinely revealed message of grace, and to aid its establishment and propagation throughout the world, it contributed nothing whatever to its discovery. All along it had been at best but a seeker after truth, but never found it. Through long and weary ages it had been in a sense "crying after knowledge, and

lifting up its voice for understanding," but the answer never came. It wrestled with the great problem of man's being and destiny, but could never solve it. It looked around it on every side, and wistfully peered after some light that might illumine, or at least break the darkness, but all in vain. It questioned nature, it questioned its own heart, it questioned the dim records and legends of the past, it questioned the schools of philosophy and the shrines of oracles, but found no satisfactory response. Instead of clearer light, there was only increasing doubt, perplexity, darkness. "The world by wisdom knew not God." Far from advancing nearer to the truth, or to any fixedness and certitude of religious belief, it only receded age after age further and further from it,—sank into a lower and lower depth of moral and spiritual degradation. Speedily forgetting the few and faint remains of a primitive revelation which they may at first have retained, and at the same time quenching that inner light of conscience and instinctive reason which "lighteth every man," the heathen nations of antiquity seem at a very early period to have lost all practical consciousness of a living personal God, and to have sunk down to a blind and idolatrous creature worship. The world became their god, instead of the God that made the world. Nature, with all her wondrous forms of beauty, and ceaseless and mysterious stirrings of creative life, ever present before their eyes in the clear, vivid light of those bright southern climes, enchained and fascinated them—filled up the whole field of view, and instead of a pathway to lead them up to God, served only as a gorgeously coloured screen to hide from their eyes his eternal majesty. They could not but be conscious of a divine power working all around them, and pervading and quickening all things in earth, sea, and sky. In the rush of the waves, in the bursting of buds and flowers, in the hum of insect life, and in the silent and solemn courses of the stars, not to

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speak of the still more wondrous workings of their own spirits within, they recognised the ceaseless energy of a mysterious Presence, which they felt though they could not see. But that Presence they conceived of rather as a presence *in* the world, than above and beyond it. Some thought of it as one great soul of the universe, others as a multitude of spiritual powers inhabiting the different elements, and manifesting their agency in the various forms and phenomena of the world's life. The one view gave birth to pantheism, the other to polytheism,—the former the religion of the select few, the latter of the common herd. Both, however, united in identifying the Creator with his own works, and thus practically denying or ignoring his eternal power and Godhead. Hence the popular deities were for the most part either mere personifications of what were called the hidden powers of nature, or idealized and deified men and women whom they had come to identify with them. The creatures thus of their own imagination, they were in all essential respects like themselves. The highest idea man could form of God was but the enlarged reflection of his own image. Jupiter, Juno, Venus, Diana, Apollo, are to all intents and purposes men and women, only of a larger size. If greater in power and beauty, they were greater also in passion and in crime,—at once enshrining the noblest virtues and sanctifying the foulest vices of their worshippers. Such as they were, they were multiplied endlessly. The great void of the human soul was not to be satisfied with two or three, or a thousand such deities. So there were “gods many and lords many.” Every nation had its own peculiar deities¹ and its own peculiar and favourite rites. There were the gods of Greece and the gods of Rome; the gods of Egypt, of Phœnicia, of Assyria,

Popular
deities.

National
deities.

¹ “Summus utrinque
Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum
Odit uterque locus, quum solos credat habendos
Esse decs, quos ipse colit.”—*Jur. Sat.*, xv. 35.

of Persia, and of every other people and tribe throughout the world. There were gods, too, of the hills and of the plains; gods of the sea and of the land; gods of the forest and of the fountain; gods celestial, terrestrial, and infernal; till the whole sphere of conscious existence seemed to teem with unseen powers of beneficent or malignant agency, before which the enthralled spirit bowed in worship, or cowered in superstitious alarm.

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Local
deities.

Such was the religion of the multitude, of the great bulk and body of the people, even in the most enlightened nations of antiquity. In the midst of these, however, there were ever found wiser and deeper spirits, whose inward hungerings after truth could not be satisfied with such husks. Hence the long and illustrious line of those who all claimed, and some of them well deserved, the name of the "lovers of wisdom." Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, were only a few out of a great multitude of such seekers; a bright and conspicuous constellation amid thousands of other lesser stars. It seemed at one time as if their weary search were about to be crowned with success; as if the true wisdom, wooed so long, were to be won at last. Socrates, the wisest and the best of heathen sages, approached so near the gate of truth, that he may be said almost to have stood on its threshold. By the lowly sense of his own ignorance, by his striving after self-knowledge, by his dependence on a higher inspiration for all his deepest thoughts and truest impulses, by his sublime resignation and calm hope of a future life, he seemed almost to catch the spirit of the gospel, while remaining ignorant of its distinctive truths. Plato, his illustrious pupil and successor, took, intellectually at least, a still higher flight. With a genius at once poetic and keenly speculative, he gathered together the scattered elements of thought inherited from his master, and combining them with the fruits of his own original meditation, formed them into a sublime system of uni-

Religion
of the few

Socrates,
ob. B. C.
399

Plato, ob.
B. C. 348.

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DUCTION.

versal philosophy, which must ever be regarded as the highest effort of the unassisted human mind in the search after religious truth, and the nearest approach ever made by heathenism toward the ideas and the spirit of the coming salvation of God. He taught the soul of man to realize its own immortal nature and its essential relationship with the divine, placed the highest good in union and communion with God, discoursed of another and higher world beyond the veil of time and sense, in which dwelt the perfect and eternal archetypes of all that is good and beautiful and true here below, and called the forlorn and sense-imprisoned spirit to aspire towards that bright region as its true, though forsaken home. There was something in all this, and generally in the lofty and ethereal tone of his whole philosophy, that was in unison with the spirit of Christianity, and which was at least fitted to prepare men's minds for the conception of that unseen kingdom of spiritual and immortal life, "which eye had not seen, nor ear heard, neither had entered into the heart of man." Such were the highest results of heathen speculation, the richest and ripest fruits of the long and toilsome search after wisdom. At best they were only "guesses at truth," and could never impart to the soul any certainty of knowledge, any assured conviction of unseen realities. They were bright and glorious dreams; and, like dreams, very vivid and real, doubtless, for the moment, to the lofty spirits whom they visited; but, like dreams too, thin and unsubstantial. To Plato succeeded Aristotle with keen logical faculty and metaphysical acumen, and while adding little to the substance of truth, contributed a method of investigation and study which has descended as an inheritance to all after time, and tended more to mould the entire form of human thought than any other influence whatsoever. But he was the last of the truly great heathen sages. With him expired the last bright gleam of ancient philosophy and wisdom.

Aristotle,
ib. 322.

Henceforth the course of human thought was incessantly downward. With the loss of their civil liberty and national life, which took place about this time, the Greeks seem rapidly to have lost also whatever was strong, earnest, and real in their intellectual and moral life. Philosophy, always hostile to the existing forms of religious faith, became more and more cold, sceptical, and godless, and gradually divided the world of speculation into three schools, each one of which seemed more removed from the truth than the other. There was first the frivolous and sensual Epicurean,¹ regarding pleasure as the highest good, tracing the world and all human things to the blind play of chance, robbing the soul of its immortality, and God of all interest in or care for the world, and thus turning human life into a mere animal and sensuous existence but a degree removed above the beasts of the field. Then there was the cold and iron-hearted Stoic,² wrapt up in the pride of his own independent and self-sufficing strength, resolving all things into a stern and unalterable fate, to which, when he can no longer resist, he calmly and grandly bends, despising pleasure, despising pain, despising life itself, except so long as it may be held with honour, and when no longer worth the keeping, throwing it away by a voluntary self-destruction,—the true religion of strong Roman hearts in an age of degradation and despair, and when nothing remained of their ancient glory but the proud spirit and the stern unbending will. And then, lastly, went forth the darkest and vilest spirit of all, a vain, frivolous, heartless scepticism,³ which had its rallying point in the new academy, but which more and more infected with its spirit the whole world of ancient speculation and thought. Scoffing at all truth, denying the possibility of any certainty of moral or religious knowledge, it placed the highest

INTRO-
DUCTION.Philoso-
phic sectsEpicu-
reans.

Stoics

Sceptics.

¹ School founded by Epicurus, ob. B.C. 271.² School founded by Zeno, ob. B.C. 260.³ School founded by Arcesilaus, ob. B.C. 240; and Carneades, ob. 123.

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DUCTION.

Moral cor-
ruption.

wisdom in the studious avoidance of care, and in the tranquil enjoyment of the present moment, reckless of the future. Thus, amid the contests and vain janglings of the other schools, there was gradually opening up beneath their feet a great gulph of absolute unbelief, which, yawning wider and wider from age to age, threatened at last to swallow up utterly whatever was sound and true in the world's life in its black abyss.¹ Meanwhile with the decay of religious belief, the moral life of the people continued age after age to sink to a lower and still lower depth of degradation and corruption. The strong, though rude natural virtues of early times had expired and given place to a civilization which, to all the vices of savage life, united a refined licentiousness peculiarly its own. Family purity, female honour, mutual faith and truth, and all those other ties which bind society together, perished in one wide deluge of cruelty, licentiousness, and shameless abandonment, realizing at last, in all its darkest lines, the picture drawn from the life by an apostle's master-hand: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient: being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affec-

¹ "Esse aliquid manes et subterranea regna,
Et contum, et Stygio ranas in gurgite nigras,
Atque una transire vadum tot millia cymba
Nec pueri credunt, nisi qui nondum ære lavantur."

Juv. Sat., ii 150.

tion, implacable, unmerciful: who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things, are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Rom. i. 22, 23, 28-32). Thus by its very misery and utter hopelessness of self-deliverance, no less than by its former yearnings and faint dreams of better days, did that old heathenism become, in a sad sense, as the "voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight."

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It was at the very moment when the world was ripe either for destruction or a divine redemption, that the Great Restorer appeared.

II. In passing now from heathenism to JUDAISM, we enter at once into a new world. Dark and dim as that old covenant was, compared with that better dispensation that was to succeed it, it was as the noonday light itself compared with the deep gloom that covered the earth all around. "From the world of polytheistic religion, we pass into the sanctuary of monotheism; from the sunny halls where nature and men are deified, to the solemn temple of Jehovah, the only true God, of whose glory all nature is but a feeble ray, and who maketh the earth his footstool." It is in truth not so much a mere preparation for the coming salvation, as that salvation itself in an embryo and rudimentary form. Beneath the rough rind of the law was already hid that divine gospel seed which was to be the germ of new life to the world. Even the great spiritual ideas and new-creative truths which were proclaimed and, as it were, embodied in Christianity, and which constitute its chief strength and glory, existed in embryo, and were to a certain extent developed in Judaism. The unity of God; his universal and eternal providence; the sanctity of law; the reality of sin; the necessity of expiation, repentance, pardon, redemption; above all, the hope burning on from age to age, and wax-

Judaism

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Messianic
hopes.

ing brighter and brighter as darker night settled down on the world, of a divine Deliverer and King, who should arrest the powers of evil, and usher in a blessed reign of righteousness and peace;—all united to form a system, which was not so much superseded as consummated and crowned in the great mystery of the Cross. In the darkest times, that religion never died wholly out from the heart of the chosen people. On the contrary, affliction, exile, oppression, massacre, and iron servitude, only served to burn that great hope of the nation into their very hearts, and render it more than ever an inseparable and indestructible element of their life. From the time of the captivity downwards, and especially during those last sad years which immediately preceded the birth of Christ, the Jewish people were more intensely Jewish, and more thoroughly pervaded with Messianic hopes and longings than ever. These hopes and longings, indeed, were in the minds of most sadly perverted and confused. The promised kingdom of righteousness had been degraded into a mere earthly dream of political supremacy and glory. Persecution, too, especially under the savage Epiphanes and the iron yoke of Rome, had driven the nation mad, and communicated a peculiar bitterness to their national feelings, and a dark exclusiveness and proud defiant bigotry to their religion till then unknown. Hated and scorned of all men, they hated and scorned in turn, and came more and more to anticipate the coming day of redemption rather as a day of vengeance to their enemies than of salvation to the world. Practical religion, too, had sunk into sad decrepitude. The living unity of the Church and nation had been broken up into a plurality of sects. Pharisaism, Sadduceeism, Esseneism, in their mutually repellent antagonism, had taken the place of the one holy nation and peculiar people. The Pharisee,—standing alone in his self-righteous and self-sufficient pride, the very impersonation of lifeless formalism and exclusive

Pharisa-
ism.

bigotry, muttering his prayers, multiplying his fastings, flaunting his broad phylacteries, heaping up ordinances, rites, and ceremonies of empty bodily service, making clean the outside of the cup and the platter, while the inner part remained impure,—was the poor petrification of traditional religion of which the living soul was gone. Then there was the cold and sceptical Sadducee, the true Jewish epicurean and rationalist, divorced in heart and soul alike from the great traditions and glorious hopes of his nation, believing neither in angels, nor spirits, nor resurrection, nor in anything else great and earnest either in earth or heaven, bent on taking the world easy, worshipping the ruling powers, and leaving the future to take its course. Then, finally, there was the mystic and contemplative Essene, a sort of Jewish ascetic monk, morbidly groaning over the evils of the times, despairing of remedy, and so fleeing to the desert waste to escape from a world which they could not hope to mend. Meanwhile here and there all over the land, and even perhaps among some of those who were more or less infected with the perverted tendencies to which we have referred, there were select souls, who, in a true sense, though with dim and imperfect views, were waiting for “the consolation of Israel;” men of humble faith, and prayer, and meditative study of the holy word, who, while bravely discharging present duty and improving present means, were looking and longing for better things to come. Such were the Simeons, the Zachariahs, the Annas, the Elizabeths, the Marys of the early gospel dawn, who first, though beneath a dark disguise, recognised the King of glory, and first welcomed him to their hearts. These were the true blossom and crown of the Old Testament Church. In these it reached at once its consummation and its second birth, at the same moment expiring and awakening to newness of life, in spirit like that of him who cried, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant

INTRO-
DUCTION.Sadducee
ism.Essene-
ism.

INTRO-
DUCTION.

depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”

Thus, alike in Heathenism and in Judaism, was the way prepared for the advent of the Prince of Peace. The one, by its forlorn misery and inarticulate yearnings,—the other, by its longing hopes and prayers,—were crying out together for the great Restorer, the Desire of all nations. The whole world was in expectation, as if intently listening to catch his approaching footsteps, when the angelic song announced to the Jewish shepherds his birth, and the star shone forth in heaven to guide the distant sages to his feet.

State of
the world.

Meanwhile, everything in the outward state of the world and the nations marvellously conspired to further the great design. The whole world was then included within the limits of one universal empire. Everywhere, from the banks of the Euphrates to the shores of the Atlantic, from the German Rhine to the Egyptian Nile, there was nothing but Rome. There was one sceptre, one law, and more and more one form of civilization and of social life. The barriers of nations were broken down, and a freedom and facility of intercourse existed between the most distant regions and tribes, such as had not been known from the beginning of the world. The great trunk lines of Roman traffic were thus the ready-made channels of new ideas, and the veins and arteries destined to convey the fresh life-blood that was about to be infused into the world. In a great measure, too, there was but one language. By a remarkable arrangement of Providence, as the result of a train of circumstances beginning with the victories of Alexander the Great and reaching downward to this time, the language of Greece, the richest and most expressive form of speech that ever lived on human tongue, had become the spoken language of the educated classes throughout the whole Roman

empire—thus, as it were, reversing in behalf of God's great design that judgment of the confusion of tongues that had been sent to defeat the perverse designs of man. With this was combined another circumstance, perhaps even more remarkable. As the Greek language was everywhere, so also was the Jewish nation. By means of their frequent captivities and dispersions, they had become at last in great measure cosmopolitized, and were found domesticated in scattered colonies of greater or less extent over the entire Roman world. In every considerable town and city of the empire there was thus a Jewish synagogue, Jewish worship, and a mixed congregation of native Jews and Gentile proselytes. Thus at once was the light of the old covenant more widely diffused, and a starting-point prepared for the introduction of the new. Everywhere the synagogue was the cradle of the Church—the train already laid, along which the living fire might run. Thus, in this sense too, the law and the prophets prepared the way and heralded the coming of the Lord. And, last of all, it was a time of universal peace. “The whole earth was quiet and at rest.” The temple of Janus was shut. The political atmosphere was still and undisturbed,—fit prelude to His coming, whose gentle influence, like dew of summer night, descends most freely in the holy silence of the calm, expectant heart.

PERIOD FIRST.

THE CHURCH OF THE APOSTLES.

FROM A.D. 1 TO A.D. 100.

CHAPTER I.

THE BIRTH AND BAPTISM OF THE CHURCH.

A.D. 1 TO A.D. 42.

PERIOD
FIRST.
—
The Bap-
tist.

It was at Bethabara, beyond Jordan, amid the wild solitudes of the Judean desert that the Church of Christ was born. From amid the solemn and awe-struck crowds that thronged around the last prophet of the law, went forth the first disciples of the gospel. The Forerunner prepared the way for the Saviour; the bright day-star of the new and better covenant first heralded the dawn, and then vanished amid its glory. The voice of the messenger that went before to prepare His way was still sounding in the ears of the expectant people, when the Lord, whom he proclaimed and they sought, suddenly came to his temple—the living temple of those true hearts whom God's secret grace had made ready to welcome him. The preaching of repentance thus fitly ushered in the preaching of peace—the sharp probing of legal conviction, the healing balm of grace. Already had the Baptist administered to his august Successor that significant rite which was to him the solemn investiture of his office; and then, having discharged that last grand act of his introductory ministry, prepared to quit the scene. Henceforth he must decrease, that his Master

may increase. The friend of the Bridegroom must drop into the shade, and hide behind his Lord. An opportunity soon presents itself of thus gracefully surrendering his trust. One day, soon after the wondrous scene at the Jordan, he is standing with two of his disciples, doubtless conversing of the things of that eternal kingdom of which he testifies, and specially, perhaps, of that divine inward cleansing without which none can enter within its pale, when a mysterious stranger passes by. John looks suddenly up, and pointing with his hand, exclaims, "Behold the Lamb of God." It was a word spoken in season, and instantly produced its effect. "The two disciples heard John speak, and they followed Jesus," passing at once within the circle of that divine attraction from which they never afterwards escaped. The name of one of these disciples is one well known to us. It was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. The convert at once became a missionary. "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias. And he brought him to Jesus." Thus already were three faithful souls gathered round the Lord, and united under him in a holy fellowship of life and love, of which the whole Church throughout all the world and throughout all time is but the increase and expansion. The circle soon widens. Jesus finds Philip; Philip finds Nathanael; John and James at their fishing-nets, Matthew at the receipt of custom, obey the divine call of grace; and so all the rest, one by one, till the mystic twelve was complete, and the first nucleus of the Church was fully formed. The twelve foundation stones were laid of that divine city of God which in all succeeding ages has been rising up according to the one predestined plan, and advancing onwards to its consummation.

Thereafter the work of conversion went on slowly but steadily. Jesus spake as never man spake, and his words found a response in many hearts. While the

CHAPTER

I.

A.D. 1-42.

First dis-
ciples.Ministry
of Christ

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FIRST.

A. D.
1-106.

Pharisees frowned, the Sadducees sneered, and the populace, with characteristic fickleness, now shouted and now blasphemed, there were everywhere hidden ones who recognised in Him their true Shepherd, and followed him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." But some there were who did receive him, and "to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." One by one they came, as the divine Spirit moved and drew them, from the east, and west, and north, and south, within the limits of the chosen land, even as afterwards through the whole world, and "sat down in the kingdom of God." Zaccheus, Mary, Martha, Lazarus, the Magdalene, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, were but a few examples of that first gospel harvest which the divine Reaper gathered in with his own hand. Much was done, and much more was prepared. Only a few sheaves of the precious wheat had been actually brought home; but to the omniscient eye of the great Husbandman the fields were already white unto the harvest. But that peerless ministry soon reached its close. Its great design was, not so much to build the temple, as to lay the foundation on which after labourers should build up the living stones to the world's end. After three brief and chequered years of toil, that life of love which began in the manger was terminated on the cross. The Church was still a little flock. The whole multitude of the faithful to whom the departing Saviour bade farewell was probably no larger than a single considerable congregation of Christian worshippers of the present day. Immediately after the ascension, the disciples, then in Jerusalem, assembled together in the precincts of the Temple to pray, and wait for the coming of the promised Comforter. The number of those who then assembled was only a hundred and twenty. These did not, of

The ascension.

course, constitute the whole number of disciples then in the world. There may have been some even in Jerusalem who were not then present, or even known to the apostles, besides many others scattered here and there over the land, and especially the more distant provinces. On one occasion we know that no fewer than five hundred brethren at once were assembled around their risen Lord, probably on that mountain in Galilee to which allusion is more than once made in the gospel narratives, as a place of general rendezvous. It was thus, probably, a grand muster of the whole body of believers throughout the land, for a last solemn interview with their glorified Lord before his ascending on high, and must have included, therefore, almost every one bearing the name of Christ who could by any possibility be present. It was a general assembly of the whole Church then on the earth—that Church which has since stretched its wings so far, and which numbers its members now, not by hundreds or thousands, but by millions in every region of the world. But it was not in numbers only that the Church was then in its infancy. In knowledge, in faith, in self-denying love, in moral and spiritual strength, and in every other element of its new and divine life, it was weak as a new-born babe. Carried hitherto in the Saviour's arms, and nursed by his ever-present care, it seemed wholly incapable of standing alone, or even of permanently existing out of his sight. But a new era is approaching. She is on the very eve of a great decisive crisis in her history, which shall do more for her in a single day than whole years or centuries of common time, and by which she is destined to pass all at once from the weakness of helpless nonage to the full stature and strength of perfect manhood in Christ.

It is ten days since the ascension of the Lord. It is the first day of the week, the second return of that

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The
miracle of
Pentecost.

sacred morning since the Saviour's departure. The disciples were, as usual, assembled together, possibly in some chamber¹ in the precincts of the Temple, for common prayer. Again they spread before the throne of grace the great promise of the Comforter, and with an intensity of holy longing and expectancy, which has waxed stronger and stronger from day to day, plead for its accomplishment, when suddenly there is a sound from heaven, as of a "rushing mighty wind," filling all the place where they are sitting, and cloven tongues like as of fire descend and rest in lambent flame on the heads of each of them. A new spirit is breathed over the assembly, and stirs and kindles every heart. Urged by a divine irresistible impulse, they open their lips together, and speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance. The report of a spectacle so strange soon spreads among the groups in the adjacent temple-courts, and a vast concourse is speedily assembled, composed both of native Jews and of devout proselytes from every quarter of the world. There is a stir of wonder, inquiry, and awe-struck expectation, with here or there a passing jeer of ribald scorn, when Peter rises up, and in a spirit widely different from that which but a few days before quailed before the maid in the judgment-hall, boldly pleads the cause of the crucified Nazarene, and testifies both to Jews and Greeks repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ. His words fell amid the startled multitude like sparks of fire. Thousands were pricked to the heart, and cried out in anguish, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They believed, confessed, and were baptized; and on the same day there were added unto the Church three thousand souls!

Its signi-
ficancy.

If the scene at Bethabara was the Church's birth, that of Pentecost was as truly its baptism. There, like

¹ The expression in Acts i. 2, ὄλον τὸν δίκον, is not necessarily incompatible with this supposition, which is supported by Olshausen and others. See, however, on the other side, Alford *in loco*.

a feeble babe, was she brought to the Saviour's arms, and by him bathed in the new-creating waters of life. The mystic prophecy of the Baptist received at once its explanation and its fulfilment, "I indeed baptize with water unto repentance, but there cometh one after me greater than I, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." That baptism was a true regenerative act. Coming up from the mystic waters the Church was in every respect a new creature,—old things were passed away, and all things were become new. New light, new life, new love, new hopes and longings, new convictions and new resolves, new and grander views of the divine eternal plan, thrill through all her being, and the consciousness of new strength fires her heart. She has passed all at once from the region of the flesh to the region of the spirit. She sees all things henceforth in heaven and earth with other eyes, and feels and responds to them with another spirit. She is strong, resolute, brave, full of buoyant life and hope, and prepared to do battle against all the world, in the name and for the sake of her Lord.

In the Pentecostal Church thus fully constituted, and endued with divine life from above, we behold the image and the type of the true and living Church of Christ in all after times. Thus, *first*, she was *supernatural* and *divine*. The power which thus newly formed and fashioned her was a power direct from heaven; it descended with the rushing wind and fiery tongues, which in themselves were but symbols, and as it were sacraments of those celestial influences of grace. She was the creature, not of circumstance, or of education, or of human contrivance and policy, but of the immediate presence and working of the new-creating spirit of God.—She was *catholic*,—already even at that first outset of her career, gathering in her members from every region under heaven—"Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers

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FIRST.

in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Lybia around Cyrene,—meet emblem of that one universal Church, whose field is the world, and within whose ample pale “there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, but Christ is all and in all.”—She was *discriminative* and *selective*, drawing in her accessions from all sides, but not drawing in all; bringing in men, not in masses and crowds, but individually, one by one, by personal conviction and conversion, through that solemn gate of life on which it is written, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”—She was *expansive*. The spirit that dwelt within her was essentially and emphatically evangelistic. It was at once aggressive and attractive. It worked like leaven; it ran like fire; it germinated and multiplied itself like seed. That first great draught of souls drawn to land by the Galilean fisherman, was but a type of the true work of the Church, and of all its true ministers and members in every age and in every region of the world.—And, finally, she was *spiritual* and *free*. She was not so much a hierarchy as a brotherhood. She was not an outward organization, but a living society. She was a kingdom indeed, but a kingdom which is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Essentially she was a congregation (*ἐκκλησία*), a sacred community of men and women united together in Christ, and dwelling together in a holy fellowship of faith and love. Outward forms of administration and of worship were, indeed, necessary in their own way, and afterwards received, at least in regard to their essential principles, an ample apostolic sanction; but in their nature they occupy a secondary, not a primary place. They touch not the being, but only the well-being of the Church. They belong not to its essence, but to its circumstances. They are not the Church, but exist *for* the

Church; "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." CHAPTER
I.

Thus already did the immaculate Bride of Christ stand forth before the world in all her queenly grace and majesty—as a woman clothed with the sun, and having the moon beneath her feet—in the freshness of her youth "looking forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

Thus constituted and established, the young Church of Christ grew apace. Its numbers swelled; its spirit rose from day to day. Like the holy waters of Ezekiel's vision, it started on its triumphant course, widening and deepening as it flowed along. Now the number of its names is three thousand souls. Now it is five thousand. Now they are reckoned, not in hundreds or in thousands, but in crowds,—Early triumphs—"Multitudes both of men and women." Gradually the mysterious influence, which had been confined at first mainly to the humbler classes of the people, creeps upward, and gathers in its own from every rank in the social scale, and even a "great company of the priests are obedient to the faith." Meanwhile the work goes on comparatively undisturbed and in silence. The fierce storms of persecution which were so soon to burst on the Church were as yet held back by an almighty hand, till the holy fire should have been fully kindled, and the faint and transient breeze of opposition which now and then awoke, fanned only, not extinguished, the flame. The common people regarded them with decided favour; the Pharisees, pleased by their powerful advocacy of the resurrection, held back undecided; the Sadducees alone set themselves in stern and unmitigated, though for the moment impotent hostility. As yet, indeed, they could scarcely be said to form a separate religious community at all. They are still nominally at least *in* the Jewish Church, though not of it. They still

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FIRST.

attend the Temple service at the accustomed hours of prayer; they still mingle more or less freely amid the synagogue assemblies; they still observe, with even more than usual reverence and solemnity, the appointed rites and feasts of the ancient worship. They did not leave the synagogue until, according to their Master's prophecy, they were *cast* out of it. They are in every respect true Jews, only that, unlike the great body of their countrymen, they are so, not outwardly only, but inwardly, and instead of sadly expecting a Messiah in the future, rejoice in a Saviour come. The old blossoms still cling, albeit faded and withered, to the now ripened fruit, and only gradually and silently drop away. But the new wine cannot long be contained within the old bottles. The more the new religion grew in strength, and the more it manifested its true spiritual nature, the more it awakened against itself the slumbering enmity of the world. Pharisee and Sadducee, at first divided in sentiment, became gradually reconciled in common hostility to a power which was alike the deadly enemy of both. The crisis which had been from the first preparing came at last. The powerful and thrilling preaching of Stephen roused into a flame the long smouldering fires. He fell, the first Christian martyr, amid a shower of stones and frenzied cries of execration. Persecution thus begun went on with increasing ferocity. The congregation was broken up and scattered; the twelve apostles alone remaining like unshaken rocks amid the waves. But that which man had designed for the Church's ruin, was overruled by God for good. That violent shaking of the tree only dispersed more widely the precious seed. "The disciples went everywhere preaching the word;" and the movement hitherto confined within the walls of Jerusalem, was extended over the whole of Palestine. Through the length and breadth of the chosen land, even to the distant borders of Phœnicia and Syria, the gospel tidings

First per-
secution,
A. D. 36.

rang. At Samaria, in particular, those fields which even in our Lord's day had been white, a rich harvest was gathered in through the ministry of the evangelist Philip, while, in the conversion of an illustrious stranger, baptized by the same hand, the distant Ethiopia seemed already to stretch out her hands unto God. At last at Cæsarea, the Roman metropolis of the Holy Land, by the hands of Peter, in obedience to an express divine intimation, the first Gentile convert was received by baptism, without circumcision, into the bosom of the Church of God. The barrier between Jews and Gentiles was broken down. The Church, standing by the shore of the great sea, on the furthest verge of the Jewish land, forgets the narrow traditions of the past, and turns her face to the wide open world.

CHAPTER
I.Baptism
of Corne-
lius, A.D
42.

It was about ten years after "He had overcome the sharpness of death," that the divine Head of the Church thus, in the fullest sense, "opened the kingdom of heaven to *all* believers."

CHAPTER II.

ANTIOCH, AND THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

A.D. 42 TO A.D. 100.

PERIOD
FIRST.
Antioch.

AT the extreme north of the Syrian coast, about three hundred miles from Jerusalem, and twenty inland from the Mediterranean shore, on the banks of the ancient Orontes,—which here, wheeling round from its northerly course, sweeps in a south-westerly direction between lofty mountain chains, through a wide and beautiful valley to the sea,—there stand a few poor habitations, built chiefly of wood and straw, and tenanted by a wretched population of some twelve or fifteen thousand souls. The place is desolate and solitary, and bears the aspect of extreme poverty and dilapidation,—though a handsome bridge still nearly entire, the remains of a stately aqueduct, the ruins of extensive walls and towers, with here and there the fragment of a marble pavement or of sculptured stone, suggest the idea of ancient opulence and splendour. Fourteen mosques, crowned with the customary minaret, attest the devotion of the present population to the religion of the false prophet; yet there still lingers on the spot the feeble remnant of another people, who meeting together for worship in a cavern bearing the name of the apostle John, faintly preserve the tradition of earlier and better times. The Christian name still, like a pale spectre, haunts the spot where the disciples were first called Christians, but where, alas! long since everything else has perished but the name. Such is the faded semblance of what was once one of the most opulent and famous cities of the world—the queenly Antioch, the stately capital of Greek kings and Roman proconsuls, the city of Ignatius and Chrysostom, and the first

metropolitan and patriarchal centre of early Gentile Christendom. Eighteen centuries ago that gay metropolis was in the very zenith of its splendour and pride, and formed the seat of a community which, in point of population and general importance, was second only, and in some respects scarcely second, to that of Alexandria and Rome. Founded three hundred years before by Seleucus Nicator as the capital of his new Greek eastern empire, it started at once into a city of the first rank, and continued during succeeding centuries, both under its own kings and under the Roman proconsuls, to grow in extent and importance. One populous quarter after another sprung up around the original city. Splendid suburbs stretched out in every direction. Stately edifices in a half Greek, half Roman style of architecture—baths, aqueducts, bridges, porticoes, palaces, temples—arose in quick succession, and imparted an air of classic refinement to a scene in other respects essentially Oriental. One magnificent street of four miles length stretched across the city from east to west, and afforded a continuous colonnade through which sheltered crowds might walk from the one extremity to the other. A theatre, a race-course, soft and sunny gardens, ministered to the amusement and pleasure of a community which was amongst the most frivolous and licentious in the world. Above all the far-famed grove of Daphne, with its interminable shades of myrtle and cypress embosoming the temple of Apollo, and watered by a thousand rills and streams from the surrounding hills, presented a perfect elysium of sensual delight, and had become the scene of an almost perpetual festival of vice. It is difficult to estimate precisely the size of the population, but at the time of St. Paul it must have numbered considerably more than a hundred thousand, while at the period of its highest prosperity and fame it was calculated as high as four or five hundred thousand. In position it was peculiarly fortunate.

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It was essentially cosmopolitan. Alike in local situation and in historical and political circumstances, it was the natural meeting-place between the east and the west—between the old world and the new. It was a kind of eastern Rome, embracing in its population all kinds of people, and every variety of costume, language, manners, within the limits of the imperial sway. The Roman senator, the Greek rhetorician, the Chaldean astrologer, the Hebrew juggler, the Pagan augur, the Jewish rabbi, merchants from Rome, Alexandria, Corinth, Arabia, Babylon, mingled together in the same society, and jostled each other in the same thoroughfares. Classic culture and Oriental forms of thought met each other face to face, and mutually acted and reacted upon each other. In fine, its extensive and world-wide commerce, flowing in on the one side through its sea-port Seleucia from all the countries of the Mediterranean, and on the other, by the caravan route behind the Lebanon, from those of the furthest east, made it one of the busiest and most thriving marts of nations, and perhaps at this moment the most central point of intercourse and influence for the whole human race. Such was the spot selected in the all-wise arrangements of Providence to be the second starting-point of the young Church of Christ. What Jerusalem has been to Judea, Antioch is henceforth to be to the world. Here at length, in the very centre of the mass, was inserted at last the little handful of leaven, which was destined to vivify and to transform the whole.

The
Church at
Antioch.

It was probably about the time when St. Peter was baptizing the family of Cornelius at Cæsarea, that in some upper chamber, in some retired and obscure street of this gay capital, a little company of disciples began to assemble together for common worship. At first they consisted entirely of Jews,—the fruit of the evangelistic labours of

some of those disciples who had fled from Jerusalem at the time of Stephen's martyrdom, and who, as the sacred annalist tells us, "went everywhere preaching the word;" but the same unseen hand which at Cæsarea was leading the apostle of the circumcision in a path to him so unexpected and so strange, was here also preparing the way for the wider propagation of the faith. Some fervent-hearted disciples recently arrived from Cyprus and Cyrene, urged forward, doubtless, by a divine irresistible impulse, were the first to break through the ancient barriers. "They spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus." The effect was immediate and striking. "The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord." From that moment the infant congregation grew apace, and as converts from among the Gentile community flocked in, in greater and greater numbers, assumed more and more the aspect of an independent religious society, distinct alike from the heathens and the Jews. It was, in fact, the first mixed congregation of Jews and Gentiles united together in one holy fellowship in Christ, and thus formed the germ of the whole Catholic Church throughout the world. The new society, accordingly, demanded a new name, and that name she received, as so often happens in such a case, not from herself, but from the world. "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch,"—in sneering ridicule, doubtless, at first on the part of those without, but soon in serious earnest alike by friends and by foes. It was, in truth, the most appropriate and expressive name by which the new community could be designated. They are not now merely "disciples," or "brethren," or "believers," or "saints,"—names all indicating, not so much a new and independent community, as a particular class or sect of the old Jewish religion,—but Christians, followers of Christ, the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King of the human race, promised from of old, and sent

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FIRST.

forth in the fulness of time, not to be the glory of Israel alone, but to be for salvation to all the ends of the earth. Thus, in a Gentile city, and by Gentile lips, was first pronounced that name which most fitly designates the Church as a catholic and world-wide society, and which, however then obscure and despised, has since been borne in triumph as a title of honour and glory through all the earth. Another important step in the development of the divine purposes speedily followed. The course of Christianity is ever forward. Antioch, now the furthest point of its advance, anon becomes the starting-point and base of operations for an onward career of progress. She becomes at once, from an advanced station, the mother Church and grand centre of missionary activity and enterprise for the world. She becomes for those early days what Rome was in the middle ages, and what London and New York are at the present day. It was probably four or five years after the full establishment of the Antiochean congregation, and when its numbers had been largely increased, and its constitution consolidated by apostolic hands, that in a solemn assembly of the Church, the Lord himself gave the word for the commencement of the work. "As they ministered unto the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus." Thus at last was that goodly vessel fairly launched on the open sea of the world. Quitting for ever the narrow stream of Jewish tradition and national exclusiveness, and even the wider, but still enclosed estuary of Gentile proselytism, she bravely turns her face to the boundless main, and trusting to the sole guidance of her heavenly pilot, commits herself to the winds and the waves.

The first
mission.

In this grand missionary movement the great apostle of the Gentiles leads the way.¹ Again and again during the twenty succeeding years did he go forth from this mother church, with his little band of missionary attendants and followers, and again returns—every time after a wider and still wider sweep of victorious progress. *First*, he traverses in a rapid and, as it were, experimental circuit, only the nearer provinces of Asia Minor, and returns, after a brief absence, to Antioch to report the success of this first commencement of the work. *Next*, he takes a wider flight—advancing by rapid stages through Cilicia, Lycaonia, Galatia, to the furthest extremity of Asia—thence, beckoned onwards by a heavenly vision, crossing the Ægean waters, and successfully preaching the cross in the chief cities of the adjacent European coast. On his *third* progress he plants himself at once at Ephesus as his head quarters—establishes the gospel both in that city and in the surrounding regions of Asia, resumes and extends his former operations in Macedonia and Greece, skirts the distant province of Illyricum, and casts his eagle eye towards Rome, which he has determined yet to see. Meanwhile the standard of the Cross has been already unfurled, and numerous and prosperous Churches founded in almost every leading city of the Roman world—in Ephesus, in Philippi, in Thessalonica, in Athens, in Corinth. At last his final and most ardent wish is granted. He did see Rome, but in a character and in a way which he little expected. He entered its imperial gates, not as a free apostle, but as an ambassador in bonds. But the same Lord who had been with him from the first, and had always led him along in the train of his triumph, did not desert him now. Though held in restraint, under the guardianship of a Roman soldier who kept him, he was permitted to receive, at his own hired house, all who came to him; and thus quietly and unob-

CHAPTER
II.

St. Paul.

First journey, A.D. 48.

Second journey, A.D. 51.

Third journey, A.D. 54.

Fourth journey, A.D. 60.

At Rome, A.D. 61-63

¹ See Appendix—*Chronological Table of the Life of St. Paul.*

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trusively to prosecute his Master's work. The things that happened unto him turned out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel, and never perhaps did he reap a richer harvest of souls than with that chained hand. And now his work was done. Having carried forward the standard of the faith from the far east to the imperial capital of the world, and planted it on its highest towers, there was little more for his great soul to desire or hope for on earth. After two years, the period of his light captivity closed, either, as most historians believe, by his temporary liberation, or by his more rigorous imprisonment, previous to his final trial. In either case, he was "now ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand." So he finished his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus—dying, as unanimous tradition testifies, a glorious martyr's death for the cause for which alone he had lived for thirty years, probably about the year of our era 68.

Martyred,
A. D. 68.

He was carried by devout men to his burial, probably in some of the subterranean vaults or catacombs beneath the city, and it is supposed that his sacred dust reposes near that quiet spot now occupied by the English cemetery, outside the Ostian gate.

St. Peter.

Meanwhile that other apostle, the rash, impetuous, self-sufficient, but noble-hearted Peter, whose name must be for ever associated with his, has for a long time passed into the shade. The great and prominent actor in all the early scenes of the Church's progress, he drops all at once, after the momentous incident at Cæsarea, out of sight. From that time we have scarce any trace of his labours, either in the Scripture annals or in authentic tradition. The only clue to the course of his life and labours is derived from the opening and the closing words of his first epistle. From the former we gather that he had some pastoral connection, probably from personal

labours among them, with the Jewish Christians throughout Asia Minor; from the latter¹ many have inferred that he had extended his missionary labours among the Jews of the dispersion eastward, as far as Parthia and Babylonia, where we know, from other sources, a numerous Jewish community had long since existed. The last conclusion, of course, rests on the assumption, in some degree doubtful, though adopted by many of the ablest critics, that the word Babylon is used there in its ordinary literal sense for the old Chaldean capital, and not in its mystic, symbolic sense, as a figurative designation of Rome. Were this latter interpretation proved to be the true one, it would establish one point, and one only, with regard to the apostle's connection with Rome, namely, that he was in that city at the time this epistle was written. It is certain, however, that if he was at Rome, he was not there long.² The Romish tradition that he spent a large portion of his life there, and occupied its episcopal see for twenty-five years preceding his martyrdom, is simply a baseless fiction, contradicted by every fact we know of his history, and by all the probabilities of the case. Had he resided steadily there at the time alleged, much more had he held the place of chief authority in its Church for years, we must have had some traces of the fact in the Acts of the Apostles, in some of the numerous epistles of St. Paul written to and from that city, or in that of his contemporary Clement, written from the same place, and still extant. The silence of all these authorities in regard to a fact so interesting and important, is of itself the most decisive proof of the opposite. There seems to us, however, no sufficient reason to call in question the very early and unanimous tradition that he did pay a visit, though it must have been a very short one, to the imperial city, and that here he suffered martyrdom during

¹ "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you" (1 Pet. v. 13).

² See Appendix—*St. Peter at Rome*.

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—
the same persecution and about the same time with St. Paul, being crucified, as the legend runs, with his head downwards.

St. John. With the names of Paul and Peter we unavoidably associate that of John. As a historical group they stand alone, as confessedly the three grandest characters and most influential actors in the early Christian Church. In the character of their minds, too, and in their religious tendencies, they are intimately related—forming, as it were, mutual complements to each other. Paul is the apostle of faith; Peter, of hope; John, of love. Paul is the man of thought; Peter, of action; John, of contemplation and meditative repose. Paul is the great preacher; Peter, the great ecclesiastic; John, the great divine. The course of this last apostle's life was in a manner symbolical of his distinctive spiritual bent. As love itself suffereth long, and patiently, and unweariedly toils, so it was ordained that the apostle of love should endure the longest alike in suffering and in labour, lingering on in the vineyard long after all the rest had gone, even to the last hour of the apostolic day. As we hear little of Peter's labours during the closing years of his life, so we hear little of John's during the earlier. The one apostle seems just entering on his work, when the other is quitting the field. We catch a glimpse of him, indeed, now and then in the opening chapters of the Acts, but it is as of one that is rather the companion only, than the energetic fellow-actor of the more forward and impetuous Peter. He seems as if to walk behind, in mysterious silence, as one who was only waiting his time, and slowly ripening for his great work, than having already entered on it. Immediately, however, after the death of his two illustrious colleagues he emerges out of the shadow, and becomes, at once and ever afterwards until his death, the central personage of the early Church History.

The three
great
apostles.

The chief sphere of his apostolic labours was Asia Minor, whose numerous and thriving Churches, planted and till now sedulously watered by the illustrious Apostle of the Gentiles, were bereft of his pastoral care at the very time they needed it most. Those germs of corruption and insidious heresy against which that faithful watchman had sounded the alarm some years before, were now growing rank and rife on every side, and demanded the presence both of a strong and a gentle hand to check and restrain the spreading evil. Two distinct streams of heretical tendency, setting in from quarters directly opposite to one another, were each equally hostile to the most fundamental and essential principles of the faith. On the one side, a stiff, carnal, pharisaic legalism, bred of the synagogue, and waxing only the more intense in its fanatic bigotry in proportion as its old national life was passing away—zealous for the law, doting on forms, clamorous for circumcision and work-righteousness—transformed the gospel of Christ into a system little better than a baptized Judaism, and degraded the divine Word made flesh into a mere teacher sent from God, like Moses or Elijah of old. This was the virulent and ever-restless antagonist of the great Apostle of the Gentiles—following him everywhere as his shadow, and starting up as “an adversary to resist him” in every field of his evangelistic labours, but which survived long after his day, and, under the name of Ebionism, continued its baneful influence far down into the next century.¹ On the other side, a spirit of prurient speculation, proceeding chiefly from the eclectic schools of Alexandria, sought to blend the chief elements of the Oriental and Greek philosophy with the truths of the

Early
heresies

¹ Amongst these there would appear from the first to have been a more and a less extreme party, the latter of whom, while themselves practising the law, did not seek to impose it upon others, and who recognised more or less clearly the divine glory of Christ. These were in the next age generally distinguished as *Nazarenes*, in contradistinction from the *Ebionites*, who carried the Judaizing tendency to the full length described in the text.

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Christian faith, and thus gave birth to a host of airy theories, in which every saving fact and doctrine was evaporated into mystic, ideal dreams. This is the "science falsely so called," against which the apostle so earnestly lifts his voice in some of his later writings. Dositheus, Simon Magus,¹ Menander, and especially, in the last years of St John's ministry, Cerinthus,² were the first pioneers of a system which, in the next century, under the name of Gnosticism, fascinated and seduced some of the first minds of the age, and formed the great antagonist of the simple doctrine of the Cross. Widely different in other respects, these two heretical tendencies were in one point agreed. They were both equally hostile to the most vital article of the faith—the incarnation of the Eternal Word. The Judaists denied or ignored his divinity; the Gnostics mystified and explained away his humanity. The one brought down the religion of heaven to the level of earth; the other sublimed it away into moonshine and thin air. Against both alike was a powerful voice required, to proclaim anew the divine saving verity—simple, yet profound, high as heaven, yet lowly as earth—that "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is come in the flesh." This was the grand work of John. For that task the aged apostle of love was alike by nature and grace peculiarly adapted. Gentle, yet uncompromising—calm yet fervent—tender as a dove, yet bold as a lion—at once the disciple of love and the son of thunder—his was precisely the character the best fitted at once to conciliate and to overawe; while his venerable age, and his peculiar position as the alone surviving member of the apostolic band, threw around his person a kind of sacred mystery, and imparted a singular weight to his words. Thus, armed alike with apostolic authority and with per-

¹ See Appendix—*Heretics of the Apostolic Age.*

² See Appendix—*Gnostic Sects and Teachers.*

sonal respect, he succeeded to the place of his martyred brother, and for thirty continuous years of laborious and loving ministry reigned in the affection, the confidence, and veneration of the Church. Ancient tradition and legend abound with tales of his pastoral diligence and fidelity, some of which are so touchingly characteristic that they may almost be said to bear the unmistakable stamp of truth. One of the most beautiful of these narratives is attested by the authority of Clement of Alexandria.

Anecdotes
of St. John

“Listen,” says he, “to a story that is no fiction, but a real history, handed down and carefully preserved, respecting the apostle John. For after the tyrant was dead, coming from the isle of Patmos to Ephesus, he went also, when called, to the neighbouring regions of the Gentiles,—in some to appoint bishops, in some to institute entire new Churches, in others to appoint to the ministry some one of those that were pointed out by the Holy Ghost. When he came, therefore, to one of those cities at no great distance, of which some also give the name, and had in other respects consoled his brethren, he at last turned towards the bishop ordained (appointed), and seeing a youth of fine stature, graceful countenance, and ardent mind, he said, ‘Him I commend to you with all earnestness, in the presence of the Church and of Christ.’ The bishop, having taken him and promised all, he repeated and testified the same thing, and then returned to Ephesus. The bishop, taking home the youth that was committed to him, educated, restrained, and cherished him, and at length baptized him. After this, he relaxed exercising his former care and vigilance, as if he had now committed him to a perfect safeguard in the seal of the Lord. But certain idle, dissolute fellows, familiar with every kind of wickedness, unhappily attaching themselves to him, thus prematurely freed from restraint. At first they lead him on by expensive entertainments. Then going out at night to plunder, they take him with them. Next, they en-

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courage him to something greater; and, gradually becoming accustomed to their ways, in his enterprising spirit, like an unbridled and powerful steed that has struck out of the right way, biting the curb, he rushed with so much the greater impetuosity towards the precipice. At length, renouncing the salvation of God, he contemplated no trifling offence, but having committed some great crime, since he was now once ruined, he expected to suffer equally with the rest. Taking, therefore, these same associates, and forming them into a band of robbers, he became their captain, surpassing them all in violence, blood, and cruelty. Time elapsed, and on a certain occasion they send for John. The apostle, after appointing those other matters for which he came, said, 'Come, bishop, return me my deposit, which I and Christ committed to thee in the presence of the Church over which thou dost preside.' The bishop at first, indeed, was confounded, thinking that he was insidiously charged for money which he had not received; and yet he could neither give credit respecting that which he had not, nor yet disbelieve John. But when he said, 'I demand the young man, and the soul of a brother,' the old man, groaning heavily, and also weeping, said, 'He is dead.' 'How, and what death?' 'He is dead to God,' said he. 'He has turned out wicked and abandoned, and at last a robber; and now, instead of the Church, he has beset the mountain with a band like himself.' The apostle, on hearing this, tore his garment, and, beating his head, with great lamentation said, 'I left a fine keeper of a brother's soul! But let a horse now be got ready, and some one to guide me on my way.' He rode as he was, away from the church, and coming into the country, was taken prisoner by the outguard of the banditti. He neither attempted, however, to flee, nor refused to be taken; but cried out, 'For this very purpose am I come; conduct me to your captain.' He, in the meantime, stood waiting,

armed as he was ; but, as he recognised John advancing towards him, overcome with shame he turned about to flee. The apostle, however, pursued him with all his might, forgetful of his age, and crying out, ‘Why dost thou fly, my son, from me, thy father—thy defenceless, aged father? Have compassion on me, my son. Fear not. Thou still hast hope of life. I will intercede with Christ for thee. Should it be necessary, I will cheerfully suffer death for thee, as Christ for us. I will give my life for thine. Stay! believe Christ hath sent me.’ Hearing this, he at first stopped with downcast looks ; then threw away his arms ; then, trembling, lamented bitterly, and embracing the old man as he came up, attempted to plead for himself with his lamentations, as much as he was able ; as if baptized a second time with his own tears, and only concealing his right hand. But the apostle pledging himself, and solemnly assuring him that he had found pardon for him in his prayers at the hands of Christ, praying on his bended knees, and kissing his right hand as cleansed from all iniquity, conducted him back again to the church. Then supplicating with frequent prayers, contending with constant fastings, and softening down his mind with various consolatory declarations, he did not leave him, as it is said, until he had restored him to the Church.”¹—So well had he learned on the bosom of Christ the spirit of Him who leaveth the ninety and nine and goeth after the lost one until he find it.

Another incident, perhaps equally well authenticated, reveals rather the character of the Boanerges than the son of consolation. Going into a public bath one day, and finding the heretic Cerinthus there before him, he immediately retired, exclaiming, “Let us flee from this place, lest the bath should fall while the enemy of the truth is within it.” Another touching incident is familiar to

¹ From *Quis dives sit salvus?* as quoted by Eusebius.

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every one. When now infirm with age and unable to walk, he was accustomed to be carried into the church by his disciples, and stretching out his hand, feebly whispered, "Little children, love one another," and then retired. Such was his gentle farewell to the Church below, ere his pure and loving spirit passed into the sanctuary above; and so at last that faithful shepherd of souls fell asleep on the bosom of his Lord, with his pastoral staff still in his hand, in the reign of Trajan, about the close of the first century of the Christian era, and at the age of upwards of ninety years.

A misunderstanding of the Saviour's mysterious words, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" gave rise to the significant legend that John did not die at all, but is only slumbering, moving the grave-mound with his breath till the final return of the Lord. The fond fiction, if not true of himself, is surely so at least of his writings, by which "he being dead yet speaketh," and wields an undying influence in the world from age to age.—feeding still afresh the lamp of love, perpetuating in the hearts of Christians the divine image of their Lord, and drawing forth ever anew the fervent response, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," till the day break and the shadows flee away.

The other
apostles.

Meanwhile, the other apostles and evangelists of the Lord Jesus were not idle, and all history testifies that the remotest climes were traversed and made to resound with the tidings of joy. The accounts, indeed, which have come down to us on the wings of tradition and brief passing allusion are vague and imperfect, like the rumours of a battle stricken far away amid strange scenes and peoples; still there is enough to assure us of the fact of a great struggle going on everywhere between the powers of light and darkness. Thus, Thomas is said to have preached the gospel in Parthia; Andrew in Scythia;

Bartholomew in India; and John Mark in Alexandria. But these are only a few of the great company of preachers, whose names and scenes of labour are long forgotten, and shall remain unknown until the revelations of the great day.

In the meanwhile the mother Church of Jerusalem still continued to live and flourish in the midst of affliction and martyrdom, under the pastoral care of James, "the brother of the Lord,"¹ who, after the departure of Peter, succeeded to the chief place of authority and influence there. A general respect gathered round the person of one, on other accounts so venerable, who was conspicuous alike for faith and probity, and procured for him the honourable title of the "Just." At once a true Jew and a fervent believer, he was of all men the best fitted to preside in a community of Jews who had but just "found the Messiah," and gently to guide the transition from the bondage of the law to the liberty of the gospel. He ruled the Church with wisdom and fidelity, until an outburst of Jewish fanaticism called him to the martyr's crown about the year A.D. 62. He was hurled from the pinnacle of the Temple, stoned, and then despatched by a blow of a tanner's club, while praying, like his Master, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed. A mysterious influence everywhere attended the preaching of the new religion. Their words were with power, and like sparks from heaven kindled and burned in the hearts of men. The hand of the Lord went with them, and great multitudes believed and turned unto the Lord. The wonder of Pentecost, that great spiritual resurrection, was but an example of what took place, on a greater or lesser scale, wherever the living doctrine spread. Old systems

¹ Whether the same person as James the Less, the son of Alpheus and cousin of Jesus, is a question still undecided, and forms one of the most difficult problems in New Testament History.

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and superstitions crumbled before it, and, more wonderful still, sinners forsook their sins and turned in repentance and newness of life to God. Thus grew and triumphed the young Church of Christ, till before the first generation had passed—the last hoary apostle fallen asleep—there was scarcely a nation of the then known world where the joyful sound had not been published, and where it had not won its trophies of grace. A new life had been breathed upon the nations, and the dry bones throughout the wide valley of the world began to stir and move with the breath of God.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH AT THE CLOSE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

A. D. 101.

It is the year 101 of the Christian era. The last of the apostles is just dead. The rich evening radiance which in his solitary ministry had for thirty years lingered on the earth when all his companions were gone, has at last passed away, and the dark night settles down again. The age of inspiration is over,—that peerless century which began with the birth of Christ, and closed with the death of John—and the course of the ages descends once more to the ordinary level of common time.

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It was with the Church now as with the disciples at Bethany, when the last gleam of the Saviour's ascending train had passed from their sight, and they turned their faces, reluctant and sad, to the dark world again. The termination of the age of inspiration was in truth the very complement and consummation of the ascension of the Lord. The sun can then only be said to have fairly set, when his departing glory has died away from the horizon, and the chill stars shine out sharp and clear on the dun and naked sky.

That time has now fully come. The last gleam of inspired wisdom and truth vanished from the earth with the beloved apostle's gentle farewell, and we pass at once across the mysterious line which separates the sacred from the secular annals of the world,—the history of the apostolic age from the history of the Christian Church.

It was indeed a dreary prospect that stretched out before the eye of the Church in those first days of her loneliness and widowhood. The world was very dark. Superstition, unbelief, moral corruption, social and poli-

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tical degradation prevailed everywhere. The black and starless night of heathenism was scarcely broken, but rather, as it seemed, rendered more terribly visible by the new light that had entered the world. The kingdom of heaven had indeed been proclaimed, but the kingdom of the devil still held sway in all its frowning strength, and defied all assault. Even that which was most sound and healthful in the old heathen religion had passed away, and with it the last bands that held society and the moral system of the world together. Faith, even heathen faith, had left the world. The old gods were dead, and no new and living God had come to take their place. The twin demons of fanatic superstition and cold scoffing scepticism divide the world between them. Ancient liberty, family purity, manly courage, female honour, mutual faith between man and man, public spirit, and national patriotism,—all are gone, and have given place to a wild carnival of epicurean licentiousness, in which nothing is heard but the universal cry, “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.”¹ In one respect, indeed, the times have changed for the better since the days of Peter and of Paul. The iron sceptre of Rome has passed from the grasp of the vile Nero to the wiser and juster hand of Trajan; but the Roman empire itself remains unchanged, and can be regarded only by Christian eyes as a power essentially evil and godless,—the very embodiment and practical realization of that kingdom of darkness which their Master had come to destroy. And yet a hundred years after his advent it still remains, apparently as strong and enduring as ever. For a while, indeed, the Church, in the expectation of the almost immediate return of her Lord, had borne patiently with the brief continuance, meanwhile, of the reign of evil; but that expectation has now passed away. The world, it has become manifest, is to have a longer lease of

¹ We speak, of course, generally. Even in those days there were noble exceptions, *c. g.* Agricola, Tacitus, &c.

life, and the devil and the devil's power are still, to all appearance, to reign over it. Still the Church is not without heart or hope. Strong in the faith of her Master and in her own divine commission and call, she goes forth bravely to her work. She may not be able, indeed, to save the world, but she will save a people out of the world. The world may go to pieces and sink to the bottom—she almost believes that it will do so; but she hopes to rescue thousands of perishing souls from the wreck, and gather them into that sure Ark of Refuge which she knows will ride out the storm. So she looks forth to the world, as Paul before looked toward Rome, alike in word and in deed declaring, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."

Before entering on the detail of her struggles and labours, let us here pause and take a brief survey of her present position as regards at once her outward progress and her internal state.

The great highway and main thoroughfare of the world in those days was the Mediterranean Sea. It was to the old world what the Atlantic is to the new,—the grand central artery of its life, intellectual, social, commercial. Around it, as around the main street or market-place of a populous city, were situated all the leading centres of human intercourse and activity. At the eastern extremity were Jerusalem and Antioch, the two earliest starting-points of religious enlightenment and progress, the one for the Jews and the other for the Gentiles. A little to the westward, on the south side of the great thoroughfare, sat the queenly Alexandria, undisputed mistress in those days of the arts and sciences of the world, with her famed museum, and library, and philosophical schools, and endless questions and speculations on all the mysteries of

Extent of
Christen-
dom.

PERIOD
FIRST.

being human and divine; opposite on the north, and ranged around a narrow but bright and busy side street, are such illustrious names as Ephesus, and Philippi, and Athens, and Corinth. Last of all, and far to the west, is Rome herself, the centre of law and government, the citadel, the council chamber, and the forum of the great city of man. It was within this sphere, accordingly, that Christianity made her first progress, and won her first triumphs, advancing, like the course of human history generally, from west to east, according to the course of the sun. Already, at the time of which we are speaking, she had firmly established herself at each of the leading centres of influence and intelligence which we have enumerated. In each of them she had a flourishing and rapidly-extending Christian community. Thus the extent of Christendom, as regards the mere area of its propagation, might be said already to be conterminous with the chief parts of the Roman empire and the civilized world. Its actual strength, however, numerical and social, considered relatively, in the empire or in any particular community is another and more difficult question. It may have been *in* all the world, and yet have formed a very small part of the world; scattered over all the nations, and yet almost entirely lost and unnoticed among them. This was, in point of fact, in large measure, the case. It was mainly confined to the cities and larger towns. These, at all times the great centres and pioneers of the world's progress, were so in those early days even more than now. In our days, the city is much; in ancient times, it was almost everything. There alone were the elements of knowledge, civil liberty, or healthful social life of any kind. The dense ignorance and moral debasement of the rural population, their unacquaintance with any other language but their own barbarous native speech, together with the difficulty and the danger of travelling anywhere apart from the great lines of communication, presented an

Numerical
and social
importance.

almost insuperable obstacle to the entrance of new ideas, and to improvement and progress of every kind. In that deadly choke-damp every light of knowledge and philosophy was quenched in darkness. Hence, in the apostolic age, the first and chief attention of the Christian evangelists was fixed on the cities. Paul pressed on straight from Troas to Philippi, from Philippi to Thessalonica and Berea, and from Berea to Athens, without apparently halting for a day in any of the regions between. Thus, at this time, and for long afterwards, the cities, like mountain peaks, had caught the light of the rising sun, while all the world besides lay deep in shadow. Even in the days of the Christian empire, the names "villager" and "heathen" were still synonymous terms, from the tenacious adherence of the rustic population to the religion of their forefathers. This, however, was not universal. Even to that unkindly soil we know that some seeds of truth had been thus early borne, and had yielded precious fruit. The messengers of the cross found their way, where no ameliorating influences, whether of education or philosophy, had ever come before. Thus, Pliny tells us that in the province of Bithynia, of which he was governor under Trajan, "this contagious superstition" as he calls the Christian faith, "is not confined to the cities, but had spread its infection among the country villages." The same thing was, no doubt, true to some extent in other provinces. This, however, was the exception. The general rule in those districts still was that darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people. Even in the cities themselves, at this period, the numerical strength and social importance of the Christian community was not great. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble had been called." The great bulk of the Churches now, and for years after, were composed of the poorest and meanest of the people,—slaves, artizans, and women; and even their number

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formed in most communities, and especially in the largest and wealthiest, but an inconsiderable proportion of the general population. The new faith had scarcely as yet made its presence felt in the empire, even as an important sect. You might have visited Corinth or lived in Rome, even in the days of St. Paul, and perhaps never have heard his name or learned the existence of Churches which he founded and fed. The learned Roman historian Suetonius, who lived during this period, knew so little about the subject that, confounding the Christians with the Jews, and mistaking the very name of their divine Master, he could write of "Claudius expelling the Jews from Rome, who had constantly been raising disturbances at the instigation of *one Chrestus*."¹ To such an extent was it still true that the true Light had come into the world, but the world knew him not!

Constitu-
tion and
organiza-
tion.

The constitution and organization of the early Churches was very simple. Following the precedents of the Jewish synagogue, which, in most instances, formed their cradle, they had a president or chief ruler, and a council of presbyters, to whom were committed the general government of the society, and the regulation and conduct of public worship.² To these were added a body of inferior ministers, or "deacons," male and female, with a view specially to the care of the poor, and the "outward business of the house of God." But the strength of the Churches lay not so much in their officers or form of polity, as in the members. Their life was emphatically social. Their unity was a unity, not of mechanical arrangement, but of life—not of artificial restraint, but of spontaneous sympathy and love. Christians had but one Master, even Christ, and all they were brethren. It was so altogether in theory, and in great measure also still in practice. Every

¹ Impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit. We proceed on the common supposition—probable, though not certain—that Chrestus here refers to Christ.

² See Appendix—*Primitive Form of Church Government*.

one had his own place and his own work, according to the different gifts allotted to each by the great Master, and the general well-being and edifying of the whole body was the result of the free and willing co-operation of all.

CHAPTER
III.

As to the form of worship in those early Christian congregations, it was in its main elements identical with that which is common to the Protestant Churches of our day. The chief peculiar features were their assembling in private houses and upper chambers, their celebration of the Eucharist at eventide, the common brotherly meal, or love-feast;¹ and the free scope then allowed to the exercise in the congregation of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit bestowed on individual members. Another touching custom too, which lingered long afterwards in the Church, bespeaks at once the tender loving spirit and the Oriental origin of the faith. In moments of solemn communion brother saluted brother, and sister saluted sister, in a holy embrace and kiss. Special circumstances often imparted a peculiar significancy and pathos to the rite. When a new convert was received after the sacred bath into the full communion of the faithful; when a brother or sister about to set out on a distant journey said farewell, or a stranger from some far country produced his letters of commendation,² and was straightway welcomed as a brother; above all in suffering days, when any parting might be the last until the great final meeting, and familiar friends who had taken sweet counsel together in happier days hung long upon each other's necks and wept, the "holy kiss" must have been something more than a picturesque and touching form. In other respects the primitive service was essentially like our own. There was the regular reading of the Scriptures, both of the Old and of the New Testament, according to a certain

Form of
worship

¹ See Appendix—*The Love Feast*.

² *Littere formatae*—*γράμματα τετυπωμένα*.

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order; there was the united offering of solemn prayer, to which the people responded with the loud Amen; there was the sacred supper, the preaching of the word, and the common song of praise.

Of the form and manner of celebrating the Lord's supper at this period, we have authentic evidence in the writings of Justin Martyr, who wrote a short time after, and whose statements are in entire harmony with the accounts of the original institution in the New Testament. "After the prayers," says he, "we greet one another with the brotherly kiss. Then bread and a cup with water and wine are handed to the president of the brethren. He receives them, and offers praise, glory, and thanks to the Father of all, through the name of the Son and the Holy Ghost, for these his gifts. When he has ended the prayers and thanksgivings, the whole congregation respond, Amen; for amen in the Hebrew tongue means, Be it so. Upon this the deacons, as we call them, give to each of those present some of the blessed bread and of the wine mixed with water, and carry it to the absent in their dwellings."

Psalmody

Of the psalmody of those early days some interesting snatches have descended to our own days. The following, for instance, is one which probably belongs to the earliest dawn of the post-apostolic Church, and which has been supposed by some to be the identical "hymn sung to Christ as God," referred to by the younger Pliny¹ as one of the most characteristic features of the Christian worship:—

"Glory be to God on high,
And on earth peace, good-will among men:
 We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee,
We give thanks unto thee for thy great glory:
 O Lord, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty,
Lord God.

¹ See *Pliny's Letter to Trajan*, in Appendix.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son,
Jesus Christ;
 Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
Have mercy upon us.
 Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
Have mercy upon us, receive our prayer.
 Thou that sittest on the right hand of the Father,
Have mercy upon us.
 For thou only art holy,
Thou only art the Lord, Jesus Christ,
 To the glory of God the Father.
Amen."

Perhaps still more touching and characteristic in its childlike simplicity is the following, entitled, "The Morning Psalm," and consisting merely of a breathing of prayer between two psalm verses:—

"Every day will I bless thee,
And I will praise thy name for ever and ever.
 Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin,
Blessed art thou, O Lord God of our Fathers,
 And thy name be praised and glorified for ever and ever.
Amen."

To which we have a companion evening psalm of the like tone and spirit:—

"Blessed art thou, O God; teach me thy statutes;
Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.
 I said, Lord be merciful unto me,
Heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee;
 Lord I flee unto thee, to hide me."
Amen.

To these we may probably add, as genuine fragments of the primitive hymnology, the inspired songs of Mary, of Zachariah, and of Simeon in the Gospel of St. Luke, together with some other relics of sacred psalmody which have been preserved, as it has been thought, in quotations in the apostolic writings. The following, for example, independently of the introductory formula indi-

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cating the quotation of familiar words, has all the rhythm and cadence of a true lyrical composition:—

“It is a faithful saying :
For if we be dead with him,
We shall also live with him ;
If we suffer with him,
We shall also reign with him :
If we deny him,
He also will deny us :
If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful :
He cannot deny himself” (2 Tim. ii. 11).¹

And this:—

“God was manifest in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit,
Seen of angels,
Preached unto the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Received up into glory” (1 Tim. iii. 16).²

And once more:—

“Unto him that loved us,
And washed us from our sins in his own blood,
And hath made us kings and priests unto God,
And his Father ;
To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.
Amen” (Rev. i. 5, 6).

Let us conceive ourselves listening to such strains as these, sung in unison to some old Jewish chant, in antiphonal response, and we shall probably catch the very echoes of that pure apostolic worship that resounded of old amid the glow and the tears of first love, in the workshop of Aquila, or the upper room at Troas.

Preaching. Of the preaching of those days we shall probably form the best idea from the extant specimens of those apostolic discourses, which were doubtless the model of all

¹ The rhythmical cadence of these words will be better recognised in the Greek original.

² See Conybeare and Howson, *in loco*.

others, both in the first age and in that which immediately succeeded it; as that of Peter at Pentecost, Stephen in the synagogue of the Libertines, and of Paul at Antioch of Pisidia. Their character, as in the case of similar addresses now, must no doubt have greatly varied according to circumstances, and the character and religious attainments of those to whom they were addressed. It must have been now didactic, now hortatory; now elementary, now profound; now simple, now erudite; now gentle and persuasive, now full of fire and passion. It was one thing at Jerusalem, another at Athens, and again another at Corinth or at Rome. It was one thing to Gentiles, another to Jews, another to Christians; the Christian evangelist became all things to all men, if by any means he might save some. Generally, however, we may say that it was more historical and less doctrinal than the preaching of modern times. The business of the preacher in most cases was not so much to discuss the doctrine, as to tell the story, of the Cross. The whole teaching of the Church, as well as the whole life of the Christian, revolved around the person and history of Jesus. That was the central Sun that vivified and illumined all. The preaching of the gospel was simply and literally the preaching of Christ; the proclaiming in the ears of a dying world all that the preacher knew of him who was the world's only life and hope. It was not a chain of principles, but a recital of facts; of facts which bodied forth before men's eyes the living Saviour, and thus enabled them so to "see the Son" that they might believe in him and live. It was especially necessary in those early days that preaching should assume this historical form. There were then no printed Bibles in men's hands, no portable summaries of Christian truth from which, apart from the living voice, men might learn the elements of the gospel history; only here and there a solitary manuscript of some single Gospel or Epistle in the hands of the Church

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authorities, or of some wealthy member who could afford to purchase the precious treasure at a great price. If any progress, therefore, was to be made at all, the preacher must begin at the beginning, and, not only once for all, but again and again reiterate the primary facts of the redemption of God. It was thus that the apostle Paul preached, as he himself tells us,—“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. xv. 1-4; comp. 1 Cor. ii. 1). His entire ministry, so far as it was evangelistic at least, must have consisted very much in the simple filling up of these great historic heads. The Redeemer’s incarnation and birth, his baptism and temptation, his holy life, his victorious death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, his sending of the Holy Ghost, and his future second coming,—these with all their manifold relations to ancient prophecy, to the soul’s wants and sins, and to human life and action, constituted in his view “the gospel,” which he lived to preach, and for which he was content to die. Of the general form and order in which those early preachers told that history of wonders, we may form probably the best idea from the mould in which the whole is cast in the three first Gospels, which have not improbably been regarded as inspired summaries of the preaching of the earliest evangelists. In entire accordance with this view, one general plan or order of arrangement, half chronological, half topical, adapted to the purposes of clear conception and easy remembrance, seems to lie at the bottom of them all, and may be reduced to the following

five heads:—I. The Redeemer's birth and early years, and especially his annunciation and baptism by the forerunner. II. His opening ministry and miracles in the neighbourhood of his Galilæan home, and especially in the district bordering on the sea of Gennesaret. III. His wider ministry in the regions lying between Jerusalem and Galilee, in the course of his journeys to and from the holy city at festal seasons. IV. His ministry at Jerusalem itself, especially at his last passover, and in the immediate prospect of his passion; and, V. His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension to the right hand of God. If we accept this view, we shall the more easily understand how, even previous to the existence of any inspired written memoirs, the gospel message, as proclaimed by so great a multitude of preachers in every region of the world, may have possessed an entire unity in the substance and general scope, with the utmost freedom and variety in the details. The so-called "Apostles' Creed" did not then exist, at least in the complete form in which we now possess it; yet we have doubtless a correct reflection of the substance of the message which apostles and evangelists proclaimed to the world, in those grand old words in which still the universal Church expresses the essential elements of her divine faith and hope; "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen."

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Literature.
Apostolic
Fathers.

Of the literature of this first age of the Church, apart from the inspired writings of apostles and evangelists, but few and scanty remains have descended to us. An epistle by Clement, the friend of St. Paul, to the Church at Corinth, exhorting to peace and unity; an epistle ascribed, but on scarcely sufficient grounds, to Barnabas, and bearing strong internal traces of an Alexandrian allegorizing leaven; seven epistles by Ignatius,¹ a disciple and friend of St. John, written on his way to martyrdom; some fragments of oral tradition of the life and words of Jesus, preserved, but with little judgment or discrimination, by Papias, another disciple of the same apostle; an epistle by Polycarp, which well reflects the character of that venerable pastor and martyr; a kind of allegorical religious romance, inculcating repentance and newness of life, bearing the name of *Hermas*;² and, last and most valuable of all, an anonymous epistle, of singular eloquence and beauty, in defence of Christianity, addressed to one Diognetus, and purporting to come from "a disciple of the apostles;"—such are the entire literary remains of a generation of Christians who had conversed with apostles and apostolic men, and had learned the message of salvation from their lips. Nor is the quality of these relics, speaking generally, of such a kind as to make us grievously regret the loss of those which have perished. A great gulf divides between them and the genuine products of divine inspiration. With something still of the simple faith and love of the earlier generation, they are marked at the same time by a comparative poverty of thought and spiritual power, which places them at an immeasurable distance from those who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They are not only in measure inferior, but in nature essentially diverse, and move in an entirely different sphere. It is their highest praise, not that they

¹ See Appendix—*Ignatian Epistles*.

² See Appendix—*Pastor of Hermas*.

emulate, but only faintly echo the powerful voices of those by whose lips the Eternal Spirit spoke to men. By their very contrast they afford the strongest negative testimony to the unapproachable majesty of the inspired Word. In their own place, however, they are most valuable. They form the only connecting link between the age of inspiration and the centuries of common time. "They still shine with the evening red of the apostolic day, and breathe an enthusiasm of simple faith, and fervent love and fidelity to the Lord, which proved its power in suffering and in martyrdom. They move in the element of living tradition, and make reference oftener to the oral preaching of the apostles than to their writings, for these were not yet so generally circulated. But they bear a testimony none the less valuable to the genuineness of the apostolic writings, by numerous citations, and by the coincidences of their reminiscences with the facts of the gospel history and the fundamental doctrines of the New Testament."¹

And so the brave vessel launched away into the wide sea, amid mist, and storm, and darkness, as if piercing her way blindly into the black and murky gloom. But her Master is at the helm, and in tempest and in calm, in light and in darkness, guides her safely on. The promise is still secure, and burns like a clear and steadfast light upon her prow, as she ploughs her onward way through the ages, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

¹ Schaff's History of the Church of Christ. See Appendix—*Apostolic Fathers*.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE I.—

ROMAN EMPERORS.	LEADING EVENTS.
<p>OTAVIANUS AUGUSTUS, first Emperor of Rome, B.C. 30; ob. 19 Aug., A.D. 14.</p> <p>14. TIBERIUS.</p>	<p>JESUS CHRIST born, at least four years before the Vulgar Era, v.c. 747 (Jarvis and Winer); 749 (Hales); 750 (Ussher and Wieseler).</p>
<p>37. CALIGULA.</p> <p>41. CLAUDIUS.</p>	<p>30. The Crucifixion.</p> <p>30. The Ascension (May 18, Wieseler). Pentecost (May 27).</p> <p>36. STEPHEN, the first martyr, stoned.</p> <p>36. Conversion of ST. PAUL.</p> <p>42. Baptism of CORNELIUS by ST. PETER.</p> <p>42. Gentile Church at <i>Antioch</i> formed.</p> <p>44. Persecution by HEROD AGRIPPA.—JAMES the elder beheaded.—Imprisonment of PETER.—PAUL and BARNABAS at <i>Jerusalem</i>, with aid from the Church at <i>Antioch</i>.</p> <p>46–48. ST. PAUL and BARNABAS at <i>Antioch</i>.</p>
<p>54. NERO.</p>	<p>48. St. Paul's first missionary journey, with BARNABAS — <i>Antioch, Cyprus, Pamphylia, Lystra, Derbe</i>.</p> <p>50. St. Paul's third visit to Jerusalem.—Conflict about Jews and Gentiles settled in his favour.—First Council at <i>Jerusalem</i>.</p> <p>50. The Apostles dispersed—JAMES (the Lord's brother) only remaining, as head of the Church at <i>Jerusalem</i>.</p> <p>51. St. Paul's second journey, with SILAS and TIMOTHY — <i>Antioch, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece</i>.—Churches founded in <i>Galatia, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Achaia</i>.</p> <p>54. St. Paul's third journey—<i>Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece</i>.—Founds a Church, and resides three years at <i>Ephesus</i>. Returns to <i>Jerusalem</i> (for the fifth time); made captive at <i>Cæsarea</i>, and kept in prison under FELIX until 60.</p> <p>60. ST. PAUL carried a prisoner to <i>Rome</i>. JAMES the JUST stoned at <i>Jerusalem</i>.</p>

SYNOPSIS OF THE FIRST PERIOD.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.	ROMAN BISHOPS.*
<p>Death of HEROD THE GREAT.—Succeeded by his sons —ARCHELAUS, in <i>Judæa</i> and <i>Samaria</i>, till A.D. 6; PHILIP, in <i>Galilee</i>, till his death in 33; and HEROD ANTIPAS, in part of <i>Galilee</i>, <i>Ituræa</i>, &c., till deposed in 39.</p>	
<p>26. PONTIUS PILATE, fifth procurator of <i>Judæa</i>, till 36. PHILO JUDÆUS (b. B.C. 26) fl. TIBULLUS and PROPERTIUS fl.</p>	
<p>30. SENECA L. ANNÆUS fl. ; put to death by NERO, A.D. 65.</p>	
<p>41. HEROD AGRIPPA I., king of all <i>Palestine</i> to 44.</p>	
<p>44. <i>Palestine</i>, a distinct Roman province. 44. <i>Britain</i> invaded by CLAUDIUS.—<i>London</i> founded, 49.</p>	
<p>47. <i>Ludi sæculares</i> celebrated at Rome. 48. HEROD AGRIPPA II., king of <i>Calchis</i>; of tetrarchy of PHILIP, 53-90. The last of the race.</p>	
<p>50-100. Roman wars with the Germans.</p>	
<p>54. <i>Armenia Minor</i> reduced to a Roman province.</p>	
<p>58. JOSEPHUS fl. ; b. A.D. 37 ; ob. 93. 60. PLINY the elder fl. ; killed at <i>Vesuvius</i>, 79. LUCAN, MARTIAL, PERSEUS, PETRONIUS, and JUVENAL fl. APOLLONIUS of <i>Tyana</i> fl. ; ob. 122. Early heretics and heretical sects—DOSITHEUS, SIMON MAGUS, MENANDER, CERINTHUS. Ebionitism and Gnostic Docetism.</p>	<p>* The whole subject of the Roman Pastorate in the first century is very obscure and uncertain. We have followed the order and dates adopted by Bunsen, <i>Hypol.</i> I., p. 33.</p>

SYNOPSIS OF THE

ROMAN EMPERORS.	LEADING EVENTS.
68. GALBA. 69. OTHO. 69. VITELLIUS. 69. VESPASIAN.	63. Supposed release of ST. PAUL from captivity, and missionary labours in <i>Macedonia, Asia Minor, Spain.</i> 64. First Christian persecution. 68. Supposed second captivity and martyrdom of ST. PAUL. 68. Martyrdom of ST. PETER.
79. TITUS.	70. ST. JOHN in <i>Asia Minor.</i>
81. DOMITIAN.	81-96. Second Christian persecution under DOMITIAN.— Banishment of ST. JOHN to <i>Patmos</i> , and supposed martyrdom of ANDREW, MARK, ONESIMUS, and DIONYSIUS of <i>Antioch.</i> 86. Church of <i>Corinth</i> deposes its rulers, giving occasion to the Epistle of CLEMENT.
96. NERVA. 98. TRAJAN.	100. Death of ST. JOHN.

FIRST PERIOD—*continued.*

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY	ROMAN BISHOPS.
65. Death of SENECA .	67. Linus .
70. Destruction of <i>Jerusalem</i> .	71. Cletus .
78-85. Wars of AGRICOLA in <i>Britain</i> .	79. Clemens .
80. Coliseum of VESPASIAN completed.	
88. Dacian war. QUINTILLIAN fl. PLINY the younger fl. TACITUS, ob. in 108; Suetonius, Plutarch, ob. 140.	88. Evaristus .

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE II.

THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL.

(FROM CONYBEARE AND HOWSON.)

	BIOGRAPHY OF ST. PAUL.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS.
A. D.		
36?	St. PAUL's conversion (supposing the $\epsilon\tau\eta$ $\tau\pi\iota\alpha$ of Gal. i. 18 Judaically reckoned).	
37?	At <i>Damascus</i> .	Death of TIBERIUS, and accession of CALIGULA.
38?	Flight from <i>Damascus</i> to <i>Jerusalem</i> , and thence to <i>Tarsus</i> .	
39?	} During these years St. PAUL preaches in <i>Syria</i> and <i>Cilicia</i> , making <i>Tarsus</i> his headquarters, and probably undergoes most of the sufferings mentioned at 2 Cor. xi. 24-26—namely, two of the Roman and the five Jewish scourgings, and three shipwrecks.	Death of CALIGULA, and accession of CLAUDIUS (Jan. 25).— <i>Judæa</i> and <i>Samaria</i> given to HEROD AGRIPPA I.
40?		
41?		
42?		
43		
44	He is brought from <i>Tarsus</i> to Antioch (Acts xi. 26), and stays there a year before the famine.	Death of HEROD AGRIPPA I. (Acts xii.) CUSPIUS FADUS (as procurator) succeeds to the government of <i>Judæa</i> .
45	He visits <i>Jerusalem</i> with BARNABAS, to relieve the famine.	
46	At Antioch .	TIBERIUS ALEXANDER made procurator of <i>Judæa</i> about this time.
47	At Antioch .	
48	His "First Missionary Journey"—from <i>Antioch</i> to <i>Cyprus</i> , <i>Antioch in Pisidia</i> , <i>Iconium</i> , <i>Lystra</i> , <i>Derbe</i> , and back through the same places to <i>Antioch</i> .	AGRIPPA II. (Acts xxv.) made king of <i>Chalcis</i> .
49		CUMANUS made procurator of <i>Judæa</i> about this time.
50	St. PAUL and BARNABAS attend the "Council of Jerusalem."	CARACTACUS captured by the Romans in <i>Britain</i> . COGIDUNUS (father of CLAUDIA [?], 2 Tim. iv. 21) assists the Romans in <i>Britain</i> .
51	His "Second Missionary Journey"—from <i>Antioch</i> to <i>Cilicia</i> , <i>Lycaonia</i> , <i>Galatia</i> .	
52	<i>Troas</i> .	CLAUDIUS expels the Jews from <i>Rome</i> (Acts xviii. 2).

THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL—*continued.*

	BIOGRAPHY OF ST PAUL.	CONTEMPORARY HISTORY
A. D.		
52	<i>Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth.</i> —Writes <i>I. Thess.</i>	
53	At <i>Corinth.</i> —Writes <i>II. Thess.</i>	The tetrarchy of TRACHONITIS given to AGRIPPA II.
54	(Spring). He leaves <i>Corinth</i> , and reaches (Summer) <i>Jerusalem</i> at Pentecost, and thence goes to <i>Antioch.</i> (Autumn). His "Third Missionary Journey." He goes To <i>Ephesus.</i>	FELIX made procurator of <i>Judæa.</i> Death of CLAUDIUS, and accession of NERO (Oct. 13).
55	At <i>Ephesus.</i>	
56	At <i>Ephesus.</i>	
57	(Spring). He writes <i>I. Corinthians.</i> (Summer). Leaves <i>Ephesus</i> for <i>Macedonia</i> , where (Autumn) he writes <i>II. Corinthians</i> ; and thence (Winter) to <i>Corinth</i> , where he writes <i>Galatians.</i>	
58	(Spring). He writes <i>Romans</i> ; and leaves <i>Corinth</i> , going, by <i>Philippi</i> and <i>Miletus</i> , (Summer) to <i>Jerusalem</i> (Pentecost), where he is arrested and sent to <i>Cæsarea.</i>	
59	At <i>Cæsarea.</i>	NERO murders AGRIPPINA.
60	(Autumn). Sent to <i>Rome</i> by FESTUS (about August). (Winter). Shipwrecked at <i>Malta.</i>	FELIX is recalled, and succeeded by FESTUS.
61	(Spring). He arrives at <i>Rome.</i>	Embassy from <i>Jerusalem</i> to <i>Rome</i> , to petition about the wall.
62	At <i>Rome.</i> (Spring). Writes { <i>Philemon.</i> { <i>Colossians.</i> { <i>Ephesians.</i> (Autumn). Writes <i>Philippians.</i>	BURRUS dies. ALBINUS succeeds FESTUS as procurator. NERO marries POPPÆA. OCTAVIA executed. PALLAS put to death. POPPÆA's daughter CLAUDIA born.
63	(Spring). He is acquitted, and goes to <i>Macedonia</i> (Phil. ii. 24) and <i>Asia Minor</i> (Philem. 22).	
64?	He goes to <i>Spain.</i>	Great fire at <i>Rome</i> (July 19), followed by persecution of Roman Christians.
65?	In <i>Spain.</i>	GESSIUS FLORUS made procurator of <i>Judæa.</i> Conspiracy of PISO, and death of SENECA.

THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL—*continued.*

	BIOGRAPHY OF ST. PAUL.	CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.
A. D.		
66	(Summer). From <i>Spain</i> (?) to <i>Asia Minor</i> (1 Tim. i. 3).	The Jewish War begins.
67	(Summer). Writes <i>I. Timothy</i> from <i>Macedonia</i> . (Autumn). Writes <i>Titus</i> , from <i>Ephesus</i> .	
68	(Winter). At <i>Nicopolis</i> . (Spring). In prison at <i>Rome</i> .— Writes <i>II. Timothy</i> . (Summer). Executed (May or June).	Death of <i>NERO</i> , in the middle of June.

THE FAITH OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.¹

I believe in God, the Father Almighty [Maker of Heaven and Earth]: And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, [dead,] and buried, [He descended into Hell];² The third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of [God,] the Father [Almighty]; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy [Catholic] Church; [The Communion of Saints]; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body, [And the life everlasting]. Amen.

¹ Commonly called the Apostles' Creed, consisting originally in the simple baptismal formula of faith in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and gradually enlarged till it assumed its present form, probably in the early part or the middle of the second century. The parts within brackets are not in the earliest copies, and were evidently added in the course of subsequent revisals, as explanatory amplifications, and in no respect alter the sense.

² Hades, or the world unseen.

PERIOD SECOND.

THE CHURCH OF THE MARTYRS.

CHAPTER I.

THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH.

A.D. 100-313.

PERIOD
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THE Christian Church, thus securely founded, went on increasing at once in numbers and in moral influence during the two succeeding centuries. The period from the death of St. John to the accession of Constantine was for the Church emphatically the period of growth. It was, as we shall soon see, a period also of sore and fiery trial; but its time of trial was pre-eminently its time of triumph. Like the mysterious bush of old, it lived and blossomed amid the flames. The more it was shaken by the storm, the more deep it struck its roots, and the more widely scattered its living seeds around. Though always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, and familiar, most of all, with scaffolds and with dungeons for three hundred successive years, she was yet the only strong and living thing in all the world, while all else was decaying and dying around her. We have no means, indeed, of minutely tracing the details of her progress. We have no register of her membership from year to year, or authentic record of the time and the circumstances of her establishment in particular provinces or cities. The vague rumours on the subject which have come down to us through the medium of uncertain tradition, assigning an

apostolic origin to almost all the leading Churches of the empire, are entitled to little weight, as they were the growth obviously of an after age, and originated probably rather in the fond wish of ecclesiastics to enhance the dignity and authority of their respective Churches, than in any authentic historic data. We have statements, however, of a broader and more general kind, in the still extant authorship of the time, which enable us, if not to fix details, yet to form a general idea of the depth and breadth of the stream at successive periods. We have already quoted the pregnant words of the heathen Pliny, as to the growth and prevalence of the faith about the beginning of the second century. About half a century later (about A.D. 160), we have the means of gauging its progress in the interval. "There is no people," the Christian apologist, Justin Martyr, could then fearlessly say, "Greek or barbarian, or of any other race, by whatsoever appellation or manners they may be distinguished, however ignorant of art or agriculture, whether they dwell in tents or wander about in covered waggons, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered, in the name of the crucified Jesus, to God the Father and Creator of all things."¹ About the same time we have authentic evidence of the progress of the truth, not only within the limits of the Roman empire, but amid barbarous tribes in far distant regions beyond its pale. Irenæus tells of "wild German tribes which, without paper or ink, have the gospel written on their hearts by the Holy Ghost;"² and Bardesanes, a learned Christian writer, living about the same time, at the court of the prince of Edessa, distinctly speaks of Christian Churches shining in the light of Christian holiness amid the fire-worshippers of the far east.³ Near this time, too, as we learn from Tertullian, the light of salvation first

Church in
A.D. 160.

¹ Justin. Dial. c. Tryph., c. 117.

² Iren., i. 3.

³ Quoted by Eusebius in *Præpar. Evang.*, vi. c. 10.

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Church in
A.D. 200.

visited our own distant isle, finding its way thither, probably through some of the Gallic Churches across the sea. Taking now another stride of fifty years, we come to the close of the second century and the beginning of the third. At that time the greatest light of the Church, and one of the most powerful minds and noblest spirits of the age, was Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus, presbyter of the Christian Church at Carthage. His testimony is the more decisive, as it is given in writings addressed to the enlightened heathen world itself, and consists of an appeal to facts, which he speaks of as known and patent to all. "In whom," says he, with somewhat, no doubt, of rhetorical exaggeration, yet still with the triumphant fearlessness of truth,—“in whom have ever the universal nations believed, save in Him who now is come? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, Asia, Egypt, and the regions of Africa beyond Cyrene—dwellers in Rome and in Jerusalem—also the various tribes of the Gætuli, the vast realms of the Mauri, the whole extent of Spain, the varied Gallic tribes, and places inaccessible to the Roman arms, but yielding themselves vanquished to the power of Christ;—Sarmatians, Dacians, Germans, Scythians, and many sequestered nations and provinces to us unknown, and which I cannot even enumerate.” “We are a people but of yesterday,” again he exclaims in his Apology, “and yet we have filled every place belonging to you—cities, islands, castles, towns, assemblies, your very camps, your tribes, companies, palaces, senates, forum. We leave you your temples only. We can count your armies; our numbers in a single province will be greater.” Elsewhere he says that in case of a persecution at Carthage, such was the number of the Christians, that the city would have to be decimated; and we learn from another source that a provincial Synod was held at the same place, about A.D. 200, under Agryppinus, which

was attended by no fewer than seventy African and Numidian bishops. Thus far as to mere extent and numerical strength. Meanwhile the new faith was gradually and steadily creeping upwards in the scale of social life, and gathering in its own more and more from the highest as well as the lowest classes of the people. Even so early as the days of Pliny, its disciples, as he complains, were of every rank in the social scale. The proud heathen philosophers, indeed, tried hard to ignore this fact, and, like Celsus, would sneeringly remark, that "wool-workers, cobblers, fullers, the most illiterate and vulgar of mankind," preached the illiterate faith, and knew how to commend it to "women and children." But none knew better than they the social importance and advancing power of the body they affected to contemn. They hated it so bitterly, not because it was so weak, but because it was so strong—not because they despised, but because they feared it. In Celsus's time, as long before, it counted its disciples in every class in the social scale, and numbered among its teachers and defenders some of the finest and brightest spirits of the age. It is true that, as his poor sneer implied, it still, as of old, preached its glad tidings specially to the poor, and found, most of all, a glad welcome in *their* hearts and homes to whom there was in heaven or earth no other comforter. This was not its reproach, but, in truth, its highest glory. Yet still, nevertheless, had it a message also to those rich alike in earthly and in intellectual wealth, which some of the deepest minds of the time did not fail to own. In truth, thus most of all did it prove its own divinity as the one true and universal religion of humanity, that it addressed itself alike to all, and gathered out its own from the midst of all, high and low, rich and poor, ignorant and refined alike. While it raised the lowest natures it conquered also the highest. It might be found under the senator's robe, the philosopher's cloak, and the beggar's rags, by

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turns. While slaves and prisoners, weak women and little children, were often amongst the noblest of its confessors, there were those also amongst the highest in the land—officers of the household, members of the royal family, captains of the guards, men and women of equestrian rank and affluent fortune, who deemed it their highest glory to live and to die for it. So early as the days of Domitian we find the emperor's own near kinswoman, Domitilla, and her husband, Flavius Clemens, amongst the number of the Christian confessors and martyrs; nor did the goodly succession of such illustrious names ever fail from the roll of the "noble army." In the sphere of thought and literature, it is enough to enumerate the names of those who were in those days the leading teachers and defenders of the faith—Clement, Justin, Origen, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Cyprian—men surely of intellectual stature and mental affluence equal, if not superior, to any of their age.

So, during three centuries of trial, mightily grew the word of God and prevailed, till at last, within a few years of its final triumph, it had become so formidable, that its fiercest and most implacable foe, the Emperor Maximinus, in one of his edicts, says, that almost all "had abandoned the worship of their ancestors for the new sect."

Causes of
success.

The secret of this wondrous progress, a phenomenon unparalleled hitherto in the history of the world, we have already partly touched on. It lay, doubtless, mainly and primarily in the nature of the religion itself—in its marvellous and truly divine adaptation to the necessities and the nature of man—to man as man—in all his conditions, circumstances, and relations. Framed by One who knew what was in man, it spoke to man as no other system had done or could do. The key fitted perfectly into all the wards of the lock, and so easily turned it. Deep called unto deep—the deep of the

divine mercy to the deep of human misery. Leaving aside all in man that was merely outward and conventional, it spoke directly home to that within his soul that was most real, deep, and everlasting, and awoke a powerful echo there. It spoke to his heart, to his conscience, to his reason, his will, and his immortal hopes and fears. To the heart it brought consolation and sympathy; to the conscience redemption; to the bewildered reason, the needful support of authoritative teaching; to the feeble will, strength; to the wistful spirit, dreaming of immortality, and groping after it, the sure and certain hope of life everlasting. All this too, came, not in a mere dry system, but, as it were, embodied and enshrined in the living person of Christ, who was himself at once the Comforter, the Redeemer, the Teacher, the King, the Resurrection and the Life. In Him this doctrine, as it were, was incarnated, and at the same time, by the sacred halo that surrounded him, accredited as divine. He stood confessed, in the light of his own transcendent majesty and grace, as the true Son of God and Saviour of the world. A strange, mysterious influence, too, like the breathing of life from above, accompanied the new doctrine. It was not only a creed, but a power; not a new doctrine only, but a new life; not only speaking to a man with persuasive sweetness and commanding authority, but, as it were, taking hold of him and carrying him away, by a sovereign and constraining might till then unknown. It was the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believed."

Therein undoubtedly lay its chief charm and power. Other circumstances, no doubt, contributed in a secondary way to aid and facilitate its progress. The miraculous powers which still lingered more or less in the Church as far down as the days of Tertullian and Cyprian, the holy lives and heroic deaths of Christians, their undoubting faith and certitude of truth, their indomitable

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zeal in propagating it, their unwearied and self-sacrificing charity, the holy bonds of love and brotherhood which bound them together in an age when every other sacred tie was giving way, and there was no other home for the heart on earth,—all these things contributed, doubtless, greatly to conciliate the favourable attention of men to the claims of the new faith. That faith, however, must still work conviction and win the supremacy of the soul through its own intrinsic truth and divine power alone. As no such merely predisposing causes can bring men under the transforming and new-creating influence of Christianity now, so no more could they then.

Some special circumstances in the existing state of the world and of the Roman empire at the time of the introduction of Christianity, which favoured its propagation, have already been adverted to in the introduction. To use the words of a recent eminent writer, “Christianity had a powerful negative advantage in the hopeless condition both of the Jewish and Gentile worlds. Since the fearful judgment of the destruction of Jerusalem, Judaism had wandered, restless and accursed, without a national existence. Heathenism outwardly held sway, but was inwardly rotten and in process of inevitable decay. The popular religion and public morality were undermined by a materialistic philosophy; Grecian science and art had lost their creative energy; the Roman empire rested on the power of the sword and of temporal interests; the moral bonds of society were sundered; unbounded avarice and vice of every kind, by the confession of a Tacitus and a Seneca, reigned in Rome and in the provinces, from the throne to the hovel. Nothing that classic antiquity in its fairest days had produced could heal the fatal wounds of the age, or even give transient relief. The only star of hope in the gathering night was the young, the fresh, the dauntless religion of Jesus, fearless of death, strong in faith, glowing with love, and destined to com-

mend itself more and more to all reflecting minds as the only living religion of humanity. ‘Christ appeared,’ says Augustine, ‘to the men of the decaying, decrepit world, that while all around them was withering away, they might through him receive a new and youthful life.’”

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I.

While considering this subject, our readers cannot fail to be reminded of the five secondary causes assigned by the sceptical historian Gibbon for the rapid growth and final triumph of the Christian Church. The problem itself which he seeks to explain he has not unfairly stated: “While that great body [the Roman empire] was invaded by open violence or undermined by slow decay, a pure and humble religion gently insinuated itself into the minds of men, grew up in silence and obscurity, derived new vigour from opposition, and finally erected the triumphant banner of the Cross on the ruins of the Capitol. Nor was the influence of Christianity confined to the period, or to the limits of the Roman empire. After a revolution of thirteen or fourteen centuries, that religion is still professed by the nations of Europe, the most distinguished portion of human kind in arts and learning, as well as in arms. By the industry and zeal of the Europeans, it has been widely diffused to the most distant shores of Asia and Africa; and, by the means of their colonies, has been firmly established from Canada to Chili, in a world unknown to the ancients.” Nor is the solution he offers for a phenomenon so remarkable, in words at least, less satisfactory. “To this inquiry,” he says, “an obvious and satisfactory answer may be returned—that it was owing to the convincing evidence of the doctrine itself, and to the overruling providence of its great Author. But as truth and reason seldom find so favourable a reception in the world, and as the wisdom of Providence frequently condescends to use the passions

Gibbon's
five causes

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of the human heart and the general circumstances of mankind as instruments to execute its purposes, we may still be permitted, though with becoming submission, to ask,—not, indeed, what were the *first*, but what were the secondary causes of the rapid growth of the Christian Church. It will, perhaps, appear that it was most effectually favoured and assisted by the five following causes: 1. The inflexible, and, if we may use the expression, the intolerant zeal of the Christians, derived, it is true, from the Jewish religion, but purified from the narrow and unsocial spirit which, instead of inviting, had deterred the Gentiles from embracing the law of Moses. 2. The doctrine of a future life, improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficacy to that important truth. 3. The miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive Church. 4. The pure and austere morals of the Christians. 5. The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman empire.”¹ Were these reasons offered in good faith, and not, as was in large measure the case, as a mere text for an insidious and covert attack on the very vitals of the Christian religion itself, they might have been accepted as, on the whole, a fair and reasonable account of the matter. The most serious exception to their validity, in the way in which he presents them, would be, that in reality they are not *secondary* causes, but *primary*—turning, not on accidental circumstances, but on the essential excellence and divine power of the religion itself. That undoubting assurance of the truth, in an age of general scepticism and perplexity, which fired what he calls the intolerant zeal of the early evangelists—which impelled them to proclaim their despised faith as the one exclusive religion for man, and made them willing them-

¹ Decline and Fall, chap. xv.—a chapter which every student should read and study at length.

selves to live and to die for it; that calm and authoritative declaration of that doctrine of immortality, on which the greatest minds had been pondering, and after which the noblest hearts had been yearning from the beginning; those miraculous signs and tokens of the divine presence with the Church, which, unless true, must have hindered rather, not helped the progress of the faith; that sublime and truly celestial image of truth and holiness which, in an age of utter and shameless abandonment, first visited the world, which was ever before the eyes of Christians, and in so many an instance realized and embodied in life; and, finally, the growth, from the teaching and the toils of a few poor Jewish fishermen, of a kingdom more united, more strong, more commanding in its influence, more lasting in its sway, than the time-honoured empire of the Cæsars itself;—these surely were no mere adventitious, favouring circumstances, but belonged to the very essence of the religion itself. They were the stamp of its divine origin, not the aids of its human development. In them we trace, not the coincidence of events or the play of circumstances, but the finger of God.

Into this divine ark of refuge men found their way, then as now, from many different directions, and by very diverse mental and spiritual leadings. Some approached the faith primarily through the *understanding*, some through the *conscience*, and some through the *heart*. One, for instance, who has been stirred before with inward thirstings after truth, and has sought satisfaction for those cravings, now in one school of philosophy, now in another, at last finds in the true light the resolution of all his doubts, and a sure resting-place for his feet. Another, oppressed in conscience by the remembrance of bygone crimes, and haunted with nameless fears and forebodings of coming woe, welcomes with joy

Different
modes of
conver-
sion.

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the proclamation of divine redemption and peace, and loses his burden at the foot of the Cross. Another of a far different class finds in the new doctrine, at first, not so much the healing of the soul, as the discovery of its deadly malady. Of comparatively pure moral life and high aspirations, he seemed even in his heathen state not far from the kingdom of God, and deemed himself, and was deemed by others, rich and increased with goods, and having need of nothing. But the shining in of the celestial light makes manifest the great darkness. Arrested by the matchless image of divine purity and holy love in the person and words of Jesus, he is at once smitten with a sense of his own worthlessness and need of transforming grace, and so, like Peter, is constrained first to cry, "Depart from me;" and then, "To whom can I go?" Another again, having first experienced Christ's healing power in the removal of some temporal malady, bodily or mental, at the believing prayer of his disciples, is drawn on by his secret grace to seek in the fellowship of the same divine Physician the higher healing of the soul. And, last of all, there was "a great multitude of impotent folk" crushed and broken by earthly calamities and adversities, and having no comforter,—slaves, prisoners, captives, orphans, strangers, who, meeting at last that peerless "religion of sorrow," of which even the world's own prophets can eloquently speak,—walking, as ever, like an angel of mercy in the shady side of the world, found in her both a comforter for time and a guide to eternity. Thus by various cords and bands were men drawn to Christ; yet still ever by "the cords of love and by the bands of a man." The tree of life, with its healing leaves and its pleasant fruit might be approached by many different paths. The city of God, bright with celestial glory, lay foursquare, and opened its pearly gates to every side of the world,—to the east and to the west, and to the north and to the south.

CHAPTER II.

MARTYR TIMES.

A.D. 100-313.

THOUGH from the first in its inmost spirit and principle alien from the genius of pagan Rome, it was a while before the Christian religion was sufficiently known to the imperial power to excite its enmity. Its obscurity was its protection. Great Rome saw it not, and therefore passed it unheeding by. Originating amongst the Jews, it was regarded at first as a mere Jewish sect, and shared alike in the impunity and the contempt with which that people were ever treated by their imperial masters. What did a Claudius or a Vespasian know, or care to know, of this new sect of Christians or Nazarenes, any more than of those other party names of Pharisee, Sadducee, Essene, Libertine, and the like, with the sound of which most Roman statesmen were familiar, but of whose meaning he scarcely deigned to inquire? Christ was then only "one Chrestus," and the controversies between his followers and the Jewish priests and people only one of those paltry squabbles to which that restless people were chronically subject. By-and-by, as the young Church became strong, it began to make its existence and its presence felt in the world, and then it stood in its genuine character and distinctive spirit face to face with Rome. Once met, they instinctively recognised each the other as its natural and irreconcilable enemy, and straightway a war of deadliest hate began between them, which was from the first one of extermination, and could terminate only by the fall of the one or the other. There was no room in the world for Christ and Caesar, and one or the other must die. Religion, according to

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the whole tradition and fundamental constitution of the Roman power, was a state affair. The gods of Rome were a part, and the greatest part of Rome herself. They were bound up inseparably with all that was most glorious in her history, and most sound and strong in her political and social life, and most of all in those brave days of old to which her best sons looked back with such sad and wistful regret. There was not one transaction of private or public life that was not mixed up more or less with their services. They were their leaders in war, their benignant benefactors in peace; they were the guardians of law, and the sanctifiers of home. Even the gay pastimes and licentious pleasures of the people acquired a kind of dignity and even religious significance by being regarded as feasts of the gods. A new divinity indeed had of late days been added to the Roman Pantheon, which seemed to pour mockery and ridicule on all the rest. The "genius of Rome" herself was reckoned amongst the number of her deities, and the statue of the reigning emperor, as embodying that august name, was crowned with votive chaplets, and worshipped with incense and sacrifice. The whimsical rite was but the recognition of a fact. The old gods of Rome were dead or dying, and the only real power on earth was the brute force of the tyrant empire. That power then must have its apotheosis and its allotted place on the national Olympus. But the decrepitude and debasement of the national worship, as evinced by this and other signs, only made the truer and stronger Roman hearts sigh the more for those glorious days of the past, when such hideous mockery of sacred things was unknown, and their old country's gods were all in all.

These gods the Christians spurned. The religion of Romulus and of Numa was to them as false and worthless as that of Nero or Domitian. Jupiter was but an impostor; Mars, a hideous and blood-stained idol; Venus,

the very impersonation of human lust and sin. Such words as these could find no tolerance on Roman ground. As at the touch of Ithuriel's spear the slumbering serpent at once awoke and showed its sting. Had the Christians merely sought to exercise in peace their own religion, and leave others in the quiet possession of theirs, they would have found, perhaps, the same toleration which was freely accorded to the followers of other foreign rites; but to blaspheme and insult the gods of Rome was an unpardonable sin, to be expiated only with blood. The Christian indeed pleaded conscience as their defence; but that plea in Roman ears was only an aggravation of the crime. What could proud Rome, the very impersonation itself of the principle of godless despotism, know of conscience? In its view public law in things civil and things religious alike was everything, and individual right and responsibility nothing. The very plea of conscience therefore was itself a high affront to the majesty of the empire, and must be at once and at all hazards put down. In truth the very idea of personal responsibility and freedom was unknown to the world till it was introduced by Christianity. Even the best and gentlest of the Roman statesmen had no better name for the sublime constancy of the martyrs to the truth they believed, than that of blind and inflexible obstinacy.¹

Other circumstances contributed to increase and inflame the hostility to the Christian profession and name, which was thus from the first inevitable. The Church was in a sense a secret society,—in days of persecution unavoidably so,—and secret societies and confederations of every kind were proscribed by the Roman law. A strange mystery, too, enveloped the character and movements of the Christians. They seemed to live under ground and to work under ground. They were everywhere; and yet, except when some special circumstance brought them under

¹ *Pertinacia et inflexibilis obstinacia.*—*Pliny.*

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public view, no one saw them or knew anything about them. They were understood to meet together for certain peculiar rites at certain secret places and times, and have the closest possible ties of organization and brotherhood among themselves; but all this out of sight. If one were early astir in the morning, or late abroad at night, he might perchance see a few obscure persons creeping stealthily, as it might seem, to some common meeting-place, and would guess that perhaps these were the Christians, but otherwise might live for months among them and hear nothing of them. Then they were intensely propagandist. While ever unseen they were ever at work. Every member was also a missionary of the sect, and lived mainly to propagate a doctrine for which they were ever ready to die. Thus the infection spread by a thousand unsuspected channels. Like a contagion propagated in the air, it could penetrate, as it seemed, anywhere, everywhere. The meek and gentle slave that tends your children, or attends you at table, may be a Christian; the favourite daughter of your house, who has endeared herself to you by a tenderness and grace peculiarly her own, and which seems to you as strange as it is captivating, turns out to be a Christian; the captain of the guards, the legislator in the senate-house, may be a Christian! In these circumstances who or what is safe? What power can defend the laws and majesty of Rome, and the peace of domestic life, against an enemy like this? Then it was often as hateful for its absence as for its presence. With sullen moroseness this strange people studiously absented themselves from all places and scenes of public entertainment and festivity. Games, shows, gladiatorial contests, public fetes of every kind, military or civil, they eschewed as they would have done the plague. Such scenes, forsooth, were so mixed up with idolatry, and so steeped in licentiousness and sin, that though consecrated by the presence and express sanction

of their country's gods, they were not good enough for them! Meanwhile the wildest and most scandalous rumours were rife as to the scenes in which they themselves indulged in their secret assemblies, while thus condemning the time-honoured festivities of their country. They worshipped an ass's head.¹ They ate the flesh and drank the blood of murdered innocents.² They rioted in indiscriminate licentiousness and unnatural crimes.³ And while blaspheming the religion of other people, they had apparently none of their own. They had neither images nor altars nor temples.⁴ They had no religious ceremonies or processions. They were, in fact, atheists—hateful alike and accursed in the sight of gods and men. These wild and extravagant calumnies were industriously circulated, and believed at least by the brutal and superstitious rabble. So whenever any public calamity befell the state, or any special circumstance occurred to aggravate the misery of the people,—a famine, a pestilence, an inundation, an earthquake, a scourge of locusts, a conflagration, a defeat by land, a hurricane at sea,—a ready cause was ever found in the existence among them of a race of men hateful to the gods, and the savage cry arose anew, "Jove withholds the rain; it is the fault of the Christians."⁵ "To the lions with the Christians; to the lions with the Christians;⁶ to the lions with the Atheists."

Such, then, was the normal condition of the Christian Church in the Roman empire during a period of nearly three hundred years. During all that time she may be said to have been in a state of chronic persecution. During all that time she was in the eye of the law an illicit religion,⁷ and under a perpetual ban of outlawry. She

Normal
state of the
Martyr
Church.

¹ Deus onochœtes

² Epulae thyestææ.

³ Concubitus œdipodei.

⁴ This was a charge against Christianity so late as the days of Celsus.

⁵ Non pluit deus: duc ad Christianos.

⁶ Christianos ad leones.

⁷ "Religio illicita." A foreign worship, not numbered among the rites tolerated by law.

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was not always actively persecuted, but she was always exposed to it. Whatever quietness and peace she at any time enjoyed, she held only by sufferance, and as it were by connivance. She was like a criminal at large, exposed every moment to the grasp of justice, which may relax its vigilance, but cannot lose its claim. Even under the mildest reigns and the most prosperous times, they were still at the mercy of any oppressive governor or angry mob, who might choose to let loose the emissaries of the law against them. Even during those long intervals of peace, when the Church so rapidly spread amongst all classes of society, and even places of Christian worship were reared in public streets before the public eye, it was still, though men had almost forgotten it, an illicit and criminal combination, and its members bound to answer for their connection with it with their lives. The fires of persecution slumbered now and then, but were never extinct. The course of the Church during all those long and weary ages was like that of one of our iron pathways under ground, in which a dim opening overhead reveals now and then for a moment the light of day, to be lost in a moment again in the blackness of darkness.

The "Ten
Persecu-
tions."

From a very early period it has been customary to reckon ten great persecutions of the Christians during those ages of trial,—under the emperors Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, Severus, Maximinus, Decius, Valerianus, Aurelianus, and Dioclesian respectively. This number is not indeed absolutely correct, being too large for the strictly general persecutions, and far too small for those which were provincial and local. It is, however, sufficiently near the truth to serve the purposes of arrangement and easy remembrance, and with this view we shall proceed upon it in the following brief summary of the events of three hundred years

First per-
secution.
Nero,
A.D. 54-68.

I. The first hostile collision between the world and the Church under the ruffian Nero, was dictated, so far as the

emperor himself was concerned, rather by personal than by political considerations. In a fit of reckless merriment he had set fire to Rome, and thus, contrary probably to his own expectation, commenced a fearful conflagration, which lasted for nine days, and laid more than half the city in ashes. To turn aside suspicion and public indignation from himself, he laid the blame on the Christians, who were already the objects of a general hatred and scorn, which procured easy credence for any charge against them, however gratuitous or monstrous. Even the historian Tacitus speaks of them with easy indifference, as a set of men "hateful for their crimes," and "the enemies of the human race." The hint was at once taken up by the brutal populace, and a furious and wasting persecution began, which proceeded thus rather from the heart of the people than from the councils of state. Nero only supplied the spark to the mine which was already prepared in the bosom of the nation. The scenes which followed, as drawn by the heathen historian in a few terribly vivid lines, are horrible beyond description.¹ The Christians were slain in crowds, amid exquisite tortures and savage barbarities. They were crucified. They were sewed in sacks made of the skins of wild beasts, and thrown to be

¹ This important passage, which should be familiar to every student, we here give at length:—

"Ergo abolendo rumor Nero subdidit reos, et quæsitissimis pœnis affectit, quos per flagitia invisos vulgus Christianos appellabat. Auctor nominis ejus Christus, Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat; repressaque in præsens exitiabilis superstitio rursum erumpebat, non modo per Judæam, originem ejus mali, sed per urbem etiam, quo cuncta undique atrocitas aut pudenda confluunt celebranturque. Igitur primum correpti qui fatebantur, deinde indicio eorum multitudo ingens, haud perinde in crimine incendii, quam odio humani generis, convicti sunt. Et pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contacti laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi, aut flammandi, atque ubi defuisset dies, in usum nocturni luminis urerentur. Hortos suos ei spectaculo Nero obtulerat, et circense ludicrum edebat, habitu aurigæ permixtus plebi vel curriculo insistens. Unde, quanquam adversus fontes et novissima exempla meritos, miseratio oriebatur, tanquam non utilitate publica sed in sævitiam unius absumeretur."—*Tac. Annal.*, xv. 44.

Compare *Juv. Sat.*, i. 155:—

"Pone Tigellinum: taeda lucebis in illa,
Qua stantes ardent, qui fixo gutture funant,
Et latum media sulcum diducit arena."

PERIOD
SECOND.

torn by dogs. They were smeared with pitch, fixed upon the sharp points of poles, and set on fire as torches to illuminate the imperial gardens at night. This persecution extended beyond the walls of Rome, and continued with more or less severity to the end of Nero's reign, four years afterwards. The terrible image of the monster, as he revelled in the lurid glare, and careered in fiendish merriment through the city in the guise of a charioteer, haunted for years afterwards the imagination of Christians, and gave rise to the rumour that their dreadful enemy was not dead, but had only retired for a season beyond the Euphrates, and would return ere long in the character of Antichrist.

Second
persecu-
tion.
Domitian,
A. D. 81-96.

II. In the rapid succession of emperors that next followed—Galba, Vitellius, Otho, Vespasian, Titus—the civil affairs of the empire were too engrossing to permit much attention to religious matters, and the Church in consequence enjoyed an interval of repose. With the reign of Domitian, however, the old balefires were kindled again. Bloody martyrdoms were frequent; but in general the suspicious and avaricious character of that mean tyrant inclined him rather to the milder expedients of confiscation and banishment, than to the punishment of death. Fines and deportations were constant, the trade of the informer brisk and thriving. As the mere profession of Christianity was treated as a crime against the State, it was easy to lay his grasp on any one of the hated sect, or reputed to belong to it, on whom he had cast a suspicious or a greedy eye. Among the victims of this persecution were the two royal sufferers already alluded to—the consul Flavius Clemens, the emperor's own cousin, who was condemned to death on the charge of Atheism, and his wife, Flavia Domitilla, who was sent into exile. It is to this period, too, our readers will remember, that the banishment of the apostle John to the isle of Patmos probably belongs.

III. Under the mild sway of the succeeding emperor, Nerva, the Church enjoyed a breathing time of rest ; but it was only a brief lull in the midst of the storm. With the accession of Trajan, in the year 98, the sky was again overcast, and the dark clouds gathered thick and black as ever. That great emperor was a true Roman, alike in his virtues and in his errors. He was the firm upholder at once of the Roman laws and of the Roman gods, and in the true Roman spirit regarded them as inseparable the one from the other. In his personal character he was humane and just, and had no inclination for cruel measures for their own sake. In the execution, however, of his country's laws, civil and sacred, and in the vindication of the majesty of Rome against every rebel power, he was firm and inflexible. He renewed the old laws against secret and unlawful assemblies,¹ and thus put into the hands of hostile governors a weapon which was freely used against the Christians; and in reply to a letter of inquiry from Pliny, Governor of Bithynia, issued a rescript, which formed the rule of procedure in criminal prosecutions against them. The document exhibits a remarkable combination of strictness and moderation,—clearly treating the profession of Christianity as criminal, yet discouraging all unnecessary severity in its prosecution. Accusations formally made were to be received and legally disposed of, but no search was to be made for criminals, or anonymous informations received. Accused persons were to be at once dismissed on their repudiating the proscribed faith, and proving their sincerity by offering incense to the gods. In the event, however, of their continuing steadfast and immovable in their holy profession, there was no alternative, even in the view of the just and clement Trajan, but to execute the last penalty of the law.² Among the sufferers in this reign were the

CHAPTER
II.
Third per-
secution.
Trajan, A.D
98-117

¹ Heteriae.

² See Appendix—*Correspondence between Pliny and Trajan.*

PERIOD
SECOND.

Martyr-
dom of
Ignatius.

aged Simeon, Bishop of Jerusalem, and like its first presiding minister, James, a kinsman of Christ, who was accused by fanatical Jews, and crucified in 107,—and the illustrious Ignatius of Antioch, who, probably in the year 115, was led to Rome in chains, a conqueror rather than a captive, and thrown to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre.

Hadrian,
A. D. 117—
138.

During the reign of Hadrian the same laws remained in force, but were administered, on the whole, with a rather more mild and gentle hand. Martyrdoms in different parts of the empire were frequent; but no public or general measures were taken for the suppression of the Christian name, while decided discouragement was offered to those wild outbreaks of popular fury to which the Church was at all times more or less exposed.

Final fall
of Jeru-
salem, A. D.
135.

The most important event of this reign bearing upon the interests of religion, was the last great insurrection of the Jews against the Roman power, under the false Messiah, Bar-Cochba,¹ and its stern suppression amid blood and flames, in the year A. D. 135. With that final struggle of their expiring national life, the last vestiges of their national Church and State were swept away. Palestine was laid waste, Jerusalem again destroyed, and a Roman colony, under the name of *Ælia Capitolina*, erected on its ruins. An image of Jupiter and a temple of Venus profaned those holy places, to which the exiled people were forbidden, under pain of death, to return, but which they were permitted, on the anniversary of their ruin, to behold and bewail from a neighbouring hill. The ancient dispensation of Moses and the prophets was no more. It expired with that old theocratic city itself, which had been from the first the centre of its life and the sanctuary of its solemnities. The Jewish-Christian Church, over which till now the spell of the old worship had more or less lingered, awoke at last to a sense of her

¹ Or "Son of the Stars" (Numbers xxiv. 17).

true destiny, and recognised in those dread events the voice of her divine Master calling to her, "Arise, let us go hence." CHAPTER
II.

From that day Christianity stands forth clearly and unmistakably as the religion, not of one land or people, but of the world; while Judaism, like an unquiet spirit, wanders without home or resting-place on earth.

IV. Under the succeeding emperor, Antoninus Pius, the condition of the Christians was still more favourable; but on the accession of his successor, Marcus Aurelius, the storm of persecution burst forth anew, and with a wider and more desolating sweep than even in the days of Nero and Domitian. In his political views inheriting the stern Roman principles of Trajan, he added to these a keen and bitter polemic zeal which was peculiarly his own. He persecuted the proscribed sect not only as a statesman but as a religious partizan. His cold and proud stoic philosophy could have neither sympathy nor tolerance for an enthusiastic superstition, whose very fervour and holy triumph in the midst of suffering and wrong shocked all his ideas of that calm and tranquil reason in which, according to his system, true wisdom lay. Accordingly he was one of the most virulent and thoroughgoing of all the heathen persecutors. While giving full scope to the fanatical passions of the populace against the Christians, he introduced, at the same time, a system of espionage and torture, with the view of searching out hidden disciples and compelling them to recant. The fires of martyrdom burned with peculiar fierceness in Asia Minor, and in the south of Gaul; the one in 167, the other in 177. In the former scene the most desperate efforts were made, by means of entreaties, threats, and tortures, to induce the Christians to deny their faith, but in vain. "Flayed by scourging," so the old chronicle runs, "so that all their muscles and arteries were laid bare; placed upon sharp-pointed spikes, with

Fourth
persecu-
tion
Marcus
Aurelius,
A.D. 161-
186.

PERIOD
SECOND.

Martyr-
dom of
Polycarp.

other like torments, the martyrs remained firm." The most illustrious victim of this dreadful time was the venerable Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, a disciple of the apostle John, who during a long and honoured life had well borne out the promise of his name.¹ After many days spent in prayer in the calm anticipation of his coming trial, he was at last seized and carried before the Proconsular tribunal. He was called on to curse Christ, and thus obtain his liberty. "Eighty and six years," he replied, "have I served him, and he never did me any wrong; how then can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?" To the further demand that he should swear by the fortune of Cæsar, his only answer was, "I am a Christian," and so terminated his last parley with the principalities of this world. He died at the stake on Easter Sunday, probably of the year 168, praising God amidst the flames for having deemed him worthy "to be numbered among his martyrs, to drink of the cup of Christ's sufferings unto the eternal resurrection of the soul and the body in the incorruption of the Holy Ghost."

Martyrs of
Vienne
and Lyons.

Of the like scenes at Vienne and Lyons, in southern Gaul, we have a very full and authentic record in an extant letter from the suffering Church itself to their brethren in Asia Minor, with whom they were closely connected, both by spiritual and by natural ties. An inexpressible pathos lingers over those simple and tender lines, traced, doubtless, amid many tears in the very field of the sore battle seventeen hundred years ago. In the fury of that terrific onset, neither age, nor kindred, nor sex was spared; heathen slaves were compelled by the rack to testify against their Christian masters, and that worthless testimony made the ground of the most exquisite tortures; but the sufferers, we are told, endured all with patience, "strengthened and bedewed

¹ "The fruitful."

by the spring of living water that flows from the heart of Christ," and deeming that "nothing can be dreadful where the love of the Father dwells, nothing painful where shines the glory of Christ!"

Of individual sufferers we can only enumerate a few of the most illustrious names. The venerable bishop Pothinus, an aged disciple of ninety years, already exhausted by a severe sickness, from which he had just recovered, was subjected to all sorts of cruel treatment, and then cast into a loathsome dungeon, where he died in two days. Blandina, a delicate female slave, displayed, under torments the most extreme and protracted, a courage and a constancy more than heroic. Lacerated with the scourge, roasted on a red-hot iron chair, tossed by a wild beast in a net, she continued to the last her brave confession, "I am a Christian, and there are no evil practices among us."¹ Ponticus, a boy of fifteen years, showed similar constancy in a similar fight of afflictions, and would be deterred, by no extremity of fear or torment, from confessing his Lord. Lastly, Symphorinus, a young patrician residing at Autun in the neighbourhood of Lyons, refused to fall down to the image of Cybele, and was condemned to be beheaded. On his way to the place of execution his own mother met him, and cheered him on to meet the battle bravely. "My son," she cried, "be firm, and fear not that death which so surely leads to life. Look to Him who reigns in heaven. To-day is thy earthly life not taken from thee, but transformed by a blessed exchange into the life of heaven."

At last the popular fury was sated with blood, and the persecution ceased, leaving a scanty remnant of those once flourishing Churches still surviving. The corpses which lay on the streets in heaps were gathered together, foully mutilated, and then burned, and their ashes thrown

¹ Alluding to the foul charges referred to above, a confession of which it was sought to extort by torture.

PERIOD
SECOND.

into the Rhone, that no vestige of their accursed dust should remain to pollute the soil.

It is to this period that the well-known legend of the thundering legion (*legio fulminatrix*) belongs. In the war with the Marcomanni, in the year 174, so the story runs, the emperor and his army were on the eve of perishing with thirst, when a sudden storm of thunder and lightning, accompanied with plenteous rain, vouchsafed to the prayers of the Christian soldiers, saved the dying host and terrified their enemies. The incident of the deliverance itself is probably not without some foundation in fact, as it seems to have been believed by Christians and Pagans alike; but the cause was explained differently by the two parties, according to their different views. The heathens ascribed the miracle, not to the Christian's God, but to their own, to whom they too, in the hour of extremity, had cried. It was Jupiter Pluvius that had sent the rain, in answer to the prayers of his true votaries, and of that pious emperor who, in the hour of danger, could lift his eyes to heaven and say, "This hand, which has never yet shed human blood, I raise to thee."

Fifth per-
secution.
Septimius
Severus,
A. D. 193-
211.

V. The succeeding twenty years, occupied by the reigns of Commodus, Pertinax, Didius Julianus, were a time of peace. There may have been individual martyrdoms here and there according to the caprice of governors, or the changeful passions of the populace; but, generally, it was one of those grateful intervals of calm, during which the Church, braced by adversity, rapidly grew in numbers and in strength. At his accession it seemed as if Septimius Severus too was to be a favourer of the Christians. A remarkable cure from a dangerous disease, which he owed to a Christian slave, Proculus, naturally conciliated his kindly feelings in their behalf. That bright prospect, however, was soon overcast, and in 203 the first warning note of a time of trial was sounded once more. By an

edict issued in that year, he prohibited, on pain of death, the transition of any fresh converts either to Christianity or to Judaism, and thus sought to set a fixed limit to a power which it was impossible wholly to suppress. As well might he have sought, by his command, to arrest the advancing tide upon the shore. The Church rose to the height of the occasion, and the era was signalized less by defections, than by martyrdoms. Egypt and Africa were, on this occasion, the great battle-fields of the faith. In *Alexandria*, Leonidas, the father of the illustrious Origen, was one of the first and noblest victims. Potamiæna, a virgin of rare beauty, alike of body and of soul, bore with heroic patience the most exquisite tortures, and shuddered only when about to be handed over to the brutal soldiery for a doom worse than death. This, however, she found the means of escaping, and perished, together with her mother Marcella, by slow immersion in a caldron of boiling pitch. But another flower of martyrdom sprang up quickly from her grave. Basilides, the soldier who led her to execution, smitten with sudden contrition, handled the sufferers gently, shielded them from indignity, and the next day confessed Christ, and won the incorruptible crown. At *Carthage*, about the same time, the trials of the faith were as terrible, and its triumphs as glorious. Three young men, Revocatus, Saturninus, and Secundulus, and two young women, Perpetua and Felicitas, were arrested and cast into prison, though still only catechumens. The authentic annals of their indomitable constancy, and calm witnessing for Christ, even unto blood, form one of the most precious relics of Christian antiquity. Perpetua, a young and noble matron of twenty-two years, had to resist not only the natural fear of suffering and of death, but the pleadings of an aged father, still a heathen, and the mute appeal of a helpless babe yet at the breast. Again and again did that heart-broken parent cast him-

CHAPTER

II.

Leonidas.

Potami-
æna.Perpetua
and Fel-
licitas.

PERIOD
SECOND.

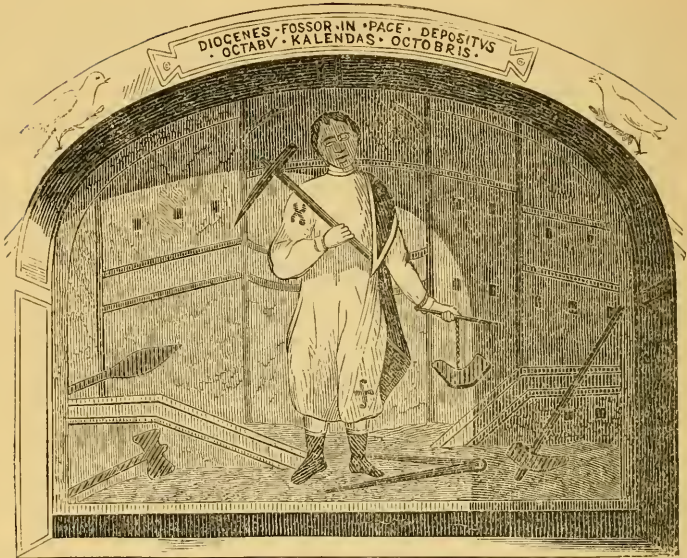
self at her feet,—first at the police office immediately after her arrest, then in the loathsome dungeon, and, last of all, at the tribunal on the day of trial,—and calling her by every tender name, implored her to spare her own and her infant's life, and her father's shame. Her heart was moved, but not shaken. "My father's grey hairs," she said, "pained me, when I considered that he alone of all my family would not rejoice that I must suffer." Already, by the reception of baptism at the hands of the deacons in the prison, she had placed the last barrier between her and the world, and had set her face like a flint, and was not afraid. The horror of the prison, indeed, more terrible even than the rack to one like her of gentle nurture, for a moment tried her constancy. "I was tempted," said she, "for I had never been in such darkness before. Oh what a dreadful day! The excessive heat occasioned by the multitude of prisoners, the rough treatment we experienced from the soldiers, and, finally, anxiety for my child, made me miserable." But the Lord stayed "his rough wind in the day of his east wind." The kindly ministry of the Church, never wanting even in scenes of bloodiest peril in these suffering days, interposed, and obtained for the prisoners the privilege of removal to another apartment, where they were separated from the other prisoners. There, by a last communion, they strengthened themselves for their great coming combat. Perpetua was comforted; and taking her infant to her bosom, encouraged herself and her companions with words of good cheer. "The dungeon," she said, "became a palace to me."

Her last parley with the judge was brief and decisive. "Have pity on thy father's grey hairs," he said; "have pity on thy helpless child; offer sacrifice for the welfare of the emperor." "That I cannot do," was her simple reply. "Are you a Christian?" "Yes; I am a Christian," and so her fate was sealed. Her companion

Felicitas, was one of low degree. But the same free heroic spirit fired the breast of the despised slave as of the high-born matron. She too had become a mother, having been seized with the pangs of travail in the loathsome prison on the very evening of her condemnation. The coarse jailor seized this occasion to aggravate her sufferings by a bitter sneer; "If thy present sufferings are so great," said he, "what wilt thou do when thou art thrown to the wild beasts? This thou didst not consider when thou refused to sacrifice." She nobly replied, "I now suffer *myself* all that I suffer; but then there will be *Another* who will suffer for me, because *I* also shall suffer for Him."

They were all five thrown to the wild beasts at a festival in honour of the nomination of the young emperor Geta. They joyfully accepted the doom, but bravely resisted an indignity which they deemed unworthy of their Christian profession. When about to be decked out, according to an old Punic custom which had descended from the days of human sacrifice, in the guise of heathen priests and priestesses, their free Christian spirits rebelled: "We have come here," they said, "of our own free will, that we may not suffer our freedom to be taken from us. We have given up our lives that we might not be forced to such abominations."

When now already torn and mangled, and about to receive the final stroke of mercy which was to terminate their sufferings, they bade each other a last farewell, exchanged once more the sacred fraternal kiss, and so together "fell asleep."



DIOGENES THE EXCAVATOR.

CHAPTER III.

MARTYR TIMES, CONTINUED—THE CHURCH IN THE CATACOMBS.

A.D. 100-313.

PERIOD
SECOND.The Cata-
combs.

WE have already remarked that during all that long time of trial, the midway point of which we have now reached, the Church may be said to have lived a life underground—to have dwelt in a realm of her own—a land of darkness, and of the shadow of death, quite apart from the bright world of living men. Deep down beneath the foundations of the social edifice, and beneath the very lowest floor of recognised and tolerated social life, the outcast people dwelt alone as in a vast and gloomy prison vault, realizing almost the psalmist's picture of those who lived free among the dead, as the dead that lie in the grave, whom men remember no more. Even in a literal sense this might almost be said to have been so. Be-

neath the gay and busy streets of Rome, and far beyond under the green fields and smiling gardens of the Campania, there lay a vast subterranean city of sepulchral passages and chambers which had been scooped out in the course of long ages from the living rock; and which served alike for a refuge to the living, and a resting-place to the dead. Originating, as it has been thought, at first in a manner wholly accidental, in the excavations made, in the early years of the empire, in the soft tufa for building purposes, those dreary vaults had been gradually extended and enlarged, according to a more definite plan, by the Christians, until they had grown into an interminable labyrinth of blind corridors and alleys, ranged in successive tiers one above another, and branching out one from another in an endless and inextricable maze. Entering by a secret opening in some sequestered spot hid by bushes and trees, and descending by a narrow flight of steps, you find yourself in the first floor or storey of this mysterious abode. Groping your way by the light of a lamp or taper, along one of the long and narrow passages which cross and recross one another in every direction, you come at length to a spot where the path descends again, and brings you by another flight of steps to another and similar labyrinth below; and from this again to another. Meanwhile on every side, in the walls, and beneath the floor alike of passages and chambers, you are surrounded by the countless sepulchres of the dead, and the rude epitaph, and simple but expressive symbol of death and victory, look out upon you through the gloom at every step. At length as you wander on in endless mazes lost, you feel that you are in a city of the dead, which in point of extent rivals, and in population vastly exceeds, the city of the living above your head. To use the words of a recent eye-witness,—

“A catacomb may be divided into three parts, its

PERIOD
SECOND.

passages or streets, its chambers or squares, and its churches. The passages are long narrow galleries, cut with tolerable regularity, so that the roof and floor are at right angles with the sides, often so narrow as scarcely to allow two persons to go abreast. They sometimes go quite straight to a great length; but they are crossed by others, and these again by others so as to form a complete labyrinth or net-work of subterranean corridors. To be lost among them would easily be fatal.

“But these passages are not constructed as the name



THE CATACOMBS OF ROME.

would imply, merely to lead to something else. Their walls as well as the sides of the staircase are honey-combed with graves; that is, with rows of excavations, large and small, of sufficient length to admit a human body, from a child to a full-grown man, laid with its side to the gallery. Sometimes there are as many as fourteen, sometimes as few as three or four of these rows, one above the other.

“When the corpse, wrapt up in a fair linen cloth, with some embalming or preserving substance, was laid in its narrow cell, the front was hermetically closed, either by a marble slab, or more frequently by several broad tiles, put edgeways in a groove or mortice cut for them in the rock, and cemented all round. The inscription was cut upon the marble or scratched upon the wet mortar. Thousands of the former sort have been collected, and may be seen in museums and churches; many of the latter have been copied and published, but by far the greater number of tombs are anonymous, and have no record upon them.”¹

At intervals in the line of these central passages or streets occur the other two kinds of excavations referred to above—the chambers and the churches. They are simply enlargements of the central passage, both in breadth and in height, by scooping out the rock on either side and above. Some were of smaller size, and were designed, evidently, to signalize the place of some more important tomb; others larger, and were destined to the purposes of religious worship. These latter, in after times profusely decorated by sculpture and painting, were doubtless at first of the simplest description. They consisted of two square or oblong chambers, one on one side, and the other on the other of the central passage, and destined respectively for the accommodation of the male

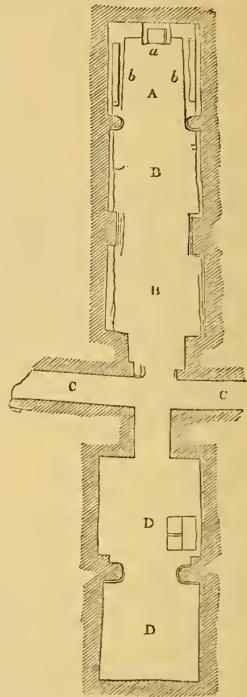
¹ Fabiola; or, The Church in the Catacombs. Anonymous, but known to be from the pen of Cardinal Wiseman.

PERIOD
SECOND.

and the female worshippers, who in those days were jealously kept distinct. They were lighted sometimes by apertures in the roof, and sometimes by lamps hung on the walls around. These walls, like those of the passages and smaller chambers, were full of niches or recesses, in which the remains of their friends were sleeping, while the living were there praising the Lord for whom some of those friends had died as martyrs.

The following description of one of the largest of these, from the same well-informed writer quoted above, together with the accompanying cut, will enable our readers to form a more distinct idea of the plan and arrangements of those subterranean sanctuaries :—

“ Each of the two divisions was double, that is, consisted of two large chambers, slightly separated by half-columns, in what we may call the women’s church, and by flat pilasters in the men’s, one of these surfaces having in it a small niche for an image¹ or lamp. But the most remarkable feature of this basilica is a further prolongation of the structure, so as to give it a chancel or presbytery. This is about the size of half each other division, from which it is separated by two columns



PLAN OF SUBTERRANEAN CHURCH IN THE CEMETERY OF ST. AGNES.

- A. Choir, or chancel, with episcopal chair (a) and benches for the clergy (b).
 B. Division for the men, separated from the choir by two pillars, supporting an arch.
 C. Corridor of the catacomb, affording entrance to the church.
 D. Division for the women, with a tomb in it.
 Each portion is subdivided by projections in the wall.

¹ Scarcely an *image*, in an age when, according to Celsus, the Christians were remarkable for *not* using such in religious worship. See chap. ii.

against the wall, as well as by its lesser height, after the manner of modern chancels. For while each portion of each division has first a lofty-arched tomb in its wall, and four or five tiers of graves above it, the elevation of the chancel is not much greater than that of those *arcosolia* or altar-tombs. At the end of the chancel, against the middle of the wall, is a chair with back and arms cut out of the solid stone, and from each side proceeds a stone bench, which thus occupies the end and two sides of the chancel. As the table of the arched tomb behind the chair is higher than the back of the throne, and as this is immovable, it is clear that the divine mysteries could not have been celebrated upon it. A portable altar must, therefore, have been placed before the throne, in an isolated position in the middle of the sanctuary.”¹

In this dreary realm, then, the Christians for centuries had their hiding place and almost their home. Here they laid the precious dust of their departed brethren; here in times of trial they fled for refuge, or met by the lurid torch light to worship their God. The desolate loneliness and dreary noisomeness of the place, where in earlier times the outlaw and the robber had had their den, suited well the condition of a people who were as the filth of the earth, and the offscouring of all things, while the numerous inlets and outlets which connected it with the outer world, and the blind labyrinth of its passages within afforded endless facilities for concealment or escape. There, even in the worst times, they were for the most part secure; and even when now and then a band of keen pursuers, attracted, perhaps, by the plaintive cadence of holy hymns, faintly heard from afar, suddenly came upon their retreat, they had usually time, at the signal of an outlying sentinel, to break up, and scatter,

¹ This last fact is instructive, as showing that fixed stone altars were unknown in the days of the catacombs, and that the presiding minister stood facing the people while celebrating the Eucharist.

PERIOD
SECOND.

and vanish amid the dark labyrinths around, before the enemy was actually upon them. As time wore on, and successive generations of Christians passed through those gloomy realms to their eternal rest, the sacred associations of the place multiplied and deepened. Nowhere was the suffering Church so much at home as where, far from the noisy haunts of sinful men, they were surrounded by the great and ever increasing congregation of those triumphant saints, from whose bright mansions they felt they were only by a thin veil separated. Everything, too, which they saw around them in rude epitaph and sculptured device, served to remind them of the same blessed hope. The very name of death was unknown even in that city of the dead. "In Christ;" "in peace;" "deposited and laid to rest in peace;" "Valeria sleeps;"¹—such are the ever recurring expressions of a faith which had shorn death of its gloom, and disarmed it of its sting; while the sheep on the shepherd's shoulders, the martyr three living amid the flames, Lazarus rising from the tomb, Noah looking out from the ark, and welcoming the returning dove when the flood was passing away, looking down from the dim walls, spoke to their hearts of strength in weakness, victory in suffering, life in death. The inscriptions are for the most part very brief, consisting often of the simple name of the silent sleeper, or with a single word added significant of rest and peace; sometimes, however, they are longer, and give full expression to the Christian faith and hope of those that rest within, and of those who laid them there. We may give one or two of these as an appropriate close to this sketch, and which may serve as a specimen of the spirit, pensive yet serene, sad yet triumphant, that fills the place, and which pervaded the whole atmosphere of Christian life in those early times. The first is one of those few which contain the date of the

¹ The designation given to the place—the "cemetery," or sleeping-chamber—spoke not of dissolution, but of repose.

year, and belongs to a time so early as the reign of Hadrian:—

CHAPTER
III.

IN CHRIST.—IN THE TIME OF THE EMPEROR ADRIAN, MARIUS, A YOUNG MILITARY OFFICER, WHO HAD LIVED LONG ENOUGH, WHEN WITH BLOOD HE GAVE UP HIS LIFE FOR CHRIST. AT LENGTH HE RESTED IN PEACE. THE WELL DESERVING SET UP THIS IN TEARS AND IN FEAR, ON THE SIXTH BEFORE THE IDES OF

The next is of the reign of Antoninus:—

ALEXANDER IS NOT DEAD, BUT LIVES ABOVE THE STARS, AND HIS BODY RESTS IN THIS TOMB. HE ENDED HIS LIFE UNDER THE EMPEROR ANTONINUS, WHO, FORESEEING THAT GREAT BENEFIT WOULD RESULT FROM HIS SERVICES, RETURNED EVIL FOR GOOD. FOR WHILE ON HIS KNEES, AND ABOUT TO SACRIFICE TO THE TRUE GOD, HE WAS LED AWAY TO EXECUTION. OH, SAD TIMES, IN WHICH AMID SACRED RITES AND PRAYERS, EVEN IN CAVERNS, WE ARE NOT SAFE! WHAT CAN BE MORE WRETCHED THAN SUCH A LIFE? AND WHAT THAN SUCH A DEATH? WHEN THEY CANNOT BE BURIED BY THEIR FRIENDS AND RELATIONS? AT LENGTH THEY SPARKLE IN HEAVEN! HE HAS SCARCELY LIVED WHO HAS LIVED IN CHRISTIAN TIMES.

What a strange alternation of faith and fear, sorrow and joy, the wail of anguish and the shout of victory, have we in these imperishable lines! meet expression of the inward life of that martyr Church, which through so long and weary ages was persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in her mortal flesh.

We add one or two more, almost at random:—

PRIMITIUS, IN PEACE; AFTER MANY TORMENTS, A MOST VALIANT MARTYR. HE LIVED ABOUT THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS. HIS WIFE RAISED THIS TO HER DEAREST HUSBAND, THE WELL-DESERVING.

PERIOD
SECOND.

PAULUS WAS PUT TO DEATH IN TORTURES, IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT LIVE IN ETERNAL BLISS.

CLEMENTIA, TORTURED, DEAD, SLEEPS: WILL RISE."

LANNUS, CHRIST'S MARTYR, RESTS HERE. HE SUFFERED UNDER DIOCLETIAN.

All those yet quoted are memorials of martyr combat and victory, and belong to the public history of the Church. Others, far more numerous, are of a lowlier kind, and reveal only the common incidents of domestic bereavement and sorrow, brightened by Christian hope:—

FLAVIA JOVINA, WHO LIVED THREE YEARS AND THIRTY DAYS—A NEOPHYTE—IN PEACE.
(SHE DIED) THE ELEVENTH BEFORE THE KALENDS.

THE SLEEPING-PLACE OF ELPIS.

ZOTICUS, LAID HERE TO SLEEP.

ASELUS SLEEPS IN CHRIST.

NICEPHORUS, A SWEET SOUL, IN THE PLACE OF REFRESHMENT.

TO DOMNINA,

MY SWEETEST AND MOST INNOCENT WIFE, WHO LIVED SIXTEEN YEARS AND FOUR MONTHS, AND WAS MARRIED TWO YEARS, FOUR MONTHS, AND NINE DAYS: WITH WHOM I WAS NOT ABLE TO LIVE, ON ACCOUNT OF MY TRAVELLING, MORE THAN SIX MONTHS: DURING WHICH TIME I SHOWED HER MY LOVE, AS I FELT IT. NONE ELSE SO LOVED EACH OTHER. BURIED ON THE FIFTEENTH BEFORE THE KALENDS OF JUNE.

LAURENCE, TO HIS SWEETEST SON SEVERUS,
BORNE AWAY BY ANGELS ON THE SEVENTH IDES
OF JANUARY.

How fondly does bereaved affection linger over each slightest circumstance of the brief life-journey of a dear child in the following:—

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—

IN CHRIST;
DIED ON THE KALENDS OF SEPTEMBER,
POMPEIANUS THE INNOCENT,
WHO LIVED SIX YEARS, NINE MONTHS, EIGHT
DAYS, AND FOUR HOURS.
HE SLEEPS IN PEACE.

ONCE THE HAPPY DAUGHTER OF THE PRESBYTER GABINUS,
HERE LIES SUSANNA, JOINED WITH HER FATHER IN PEACE.¹

LEVITAE CONIUNX PETRONIA FORMA PVDORIS
HIS MEA DEPONENS SEDIBVS OSSA LOCO
PARCITE VOS LACRIMIS DVLGES CVM CONIVGE
NATAE
VIVENTEMQVE DEO CREDITE FLERE NEFAS
DP IN PACE III NON OCTOBRIS FESTO VC CONSS.

Petronia, a deacon's wife, the type of modesty.—In this place I lay my bones; spare your tears, dear husband and daughters, and believe that it is forbidden to weep for one who lives in God. Buried in peace, on the 3d before the Nones of October, in the consulate of Festus (*i.e.* in 472).

HUNC MIHI COMPOSUIT TUMULUM LAURENTIA
CONJUX
MORIBUS APTA MEIS, SEMPER VENERANDA, FIDELIS.
INVIDIA INFELIX TANDEM COMPRESSA QUIESCIT
OCTAGINTA LEO TRANSCENDIT EPISCOPUS ANNOS.

My wife Laurentia made me this tomb; she was ever suited to my disposition, venerable and faithful. At length disappointed envy lies crushed: the bishop Leo survived his 80th year.

¹ Observe the light thrown by these memorials on the question of the marriage of the clergy in early times, as on many other points. The total absence, for instance, in the early inscriptions of every trace of Mariolatry is most instructive.

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We resume now the thread of our narrative, which has arrived at that time when the catacombs were most of all the familiar resort of the persecuted flock, and when the congregation of the silent sleepers was most rapidly gathering.

To the sad times with which the third century opened, and whose bloody footprints we, at the close of our last chapter, briefly retraced, there succeeded an interval of repose. The licentious Heliogabalus, and the gentle and virtuous Alexander Severus alike, though, for very opposite reasons, befriended or at least tacitly tolerated the Church. The wild attempt of the one to fuse all religions, and Christianity among the rest, into one, and the nobler eclecticism of the other,¹ which sought to recognise the good, the beautiful, and the true in every existing form of religious life, were alike opposed to the principle of persecution. So for a period of seventeen years the Churches of Christ had rest throughout the whole Roman world. But with the assassination of the latter emperor, and the accession to the throne of his murderer, the savage Maximinus, the storm of persecution awoke anew. In sheer contradiction to the tolerant policy of his predecessor, he unsheathed the sword and at the same time gave full scope to the outbreaks of popular fury which had been excited by some recent earthquakes. The time of trial, however, was very brief, having been cut short by the death of the tyrant himself within three years, and the course of events again flowed on tranquilly under the reigns of Gordian and Philip the Arabian. The latter favoured the Christians in so open and marked a manner that he has been regarded by some, though on

Sixth per-
secution.
Maximin-
us, A. D.
235-238.

¹ In his private chapel he set up the image of Christ, along with those of Abraham, Orpheus, and Apollonius of Tyana, and had the golden gospel rule, "As ye would that men should do unto you," &c., inscribed on the walls of his palace and on public monuments. His mother, Julia Mammæa, was a friend and correspondent of Origen.

scarcely sufficient grounds, as having been himself a
Christian.

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III.

It will thus have been seen that with but one rude A long
but brief interruption the Church had now enjoyed a long peace.
peace of nearly forty years, from the death of Septimius
Severus in 211 to that of Philip in 249. The deceitful
calm was favourable to her growth, but not to her true
life and strength. Numbers were increased, but faith
was enfeebled and discipline relaxed. The vain and the
worldly now swarmed within the Church, on which at last
the world had begun to smile, and men entered in flocks
within the sacred pale, to which before earnest souls
alone had found their way, one by one, by the strait
and lowly gate. Hence iniquity abounded; the love of
many waxed cold; scandals were rife; faction and party
spirit raged. The little flock of faithful souls who had
forsaken all for Christ, and were prepared any day to die
for him, had grown into a great promiscuous gathering, of
whom the majority were Christians only in name, and more
than half-heathen in heart. It was thus in the cities and
larger towns. In the more thinly peopled rural districts
an opposite process of contraction had been going on. In
the defect of living faith and zeal, as well as of those holy
energies of exalted enthusiasm which stirring days excite,
the Christian flocks had been gradually dwindling away,
or had died out altogether. There were churches with-
out bishops, and there were bishops without churches.
Old positions of strength were abandoned or but feebly
defended, and few new conquests were made.¹ The
salt had lost its savour. The leaven had ceased to
spread. Thus in both ways, in her expansion and in
her contraction alike, the Church gave signs of a feeble
and unhealthy inward state, as of a body enervated
by luxury, which at once grows in unwieldy bulk

¹ See Cyprian's Tract de Lapsis, *passim*.

PERIOD at the centre, and at the extremities shrinks and pines
SECOND. away.

Seventh
persecu-
tion.
Decius.
A. D. 249-
251.

The Church was accordingly but ill-prepared for those days of fiery trial which were again at hand; and had, indeed, herself, by her glaring abuses and weaknesses, invited the blow which was now struck at her very life. The stroke itself was well aimed. While in point of extent, consistency, and steadfast purpose, the persecution under Decius exceeded any that had before wasted the Church, it was at the same time directed to that special point which rendered it most formidable in a time of spiritual declension and languor. The great aim was to tempt, not destroy; to produce defection, not rouse to martyrdom. Every expedient and resource, whether of severity or of mercy, were employed with this view. While from the first a war of extermination was proclaimed against the pastors, a gentler treatment was reserved for the flocks. Every penalty short of the extreme doom of death; every promise and indulgence short of full exemption from the accursed compliance, were employed by turns to frighten or to cajole. The most ingenious evasions and subterfuges were devised to ensnare the worldly and the wavering. A mere grain of incense cast on the flaming altar—a mere mechanical act that may mean anything or nothing will be enough.¹ Even a certificate from the magistrate, procured no one needs know how, that you have complied with the requisitions of the edict, though you never actually sacrificed, will answer the purpose.² Nay, a simple deposition, in form, that your name is enrolled in the protocol of the authorities among those who have yielded obedience, will be accepted as proof sufficient of the fact.³ Numbers took the bait, and saved their worldly goods, by the virtual denial, more or less explicit, of their faith. Some even rushed eagerly to the altar as if in haste to wash their hands clean of all

¹ Thurificati, sacrificati.

² Libellatici.

³ Acta facientes.

connection with a religion which had become so dangerous. Others advanced pale and trembling, inwardly writhing on the rack of conscience; and looking as a contemporary tells us, not so much like men sacrificing as being themselves sacrificed. Some directly purchased false certificates of compliance, others were better pleased to have it done by heathen relatives or friends in their behalf without any direct interference of their own. In one way or another the number of defections and implied apostasies was very great. At the first burst of the assault it seemed as if the Christian host were thrown into utter disorder, and panic spreading through all its ranks. The spirit of the enemy rose with the first success. Fresh measures of severity were adopted, and sanguine hopes were cherished of at last accomplishing the utter extermination of a hated sect, against which former emperors had struggled in vain. But the anticipated triumph was soon found to be premature. The spirit of the Church at last rose as the conflict thickened, and she came forth from the struggle now, as ever before, victorious. The great cloud of waverers and apostates which the first blast of danger had carried away, was soon seen to be only a cloud of chaff; the solid and the precious wheat remained behind.

The Church of Rome was at this time specially distinguished for the faith and patience of its suffering members. Its Bishop Fabianus was among the first to win the martyr's crown. The prison was filled with her confessors, who, after enduring for two long years the indescribable horrors of a Roman dungeon, could thus write in holy triumph to their brethren at Carthage:—
‘What more glorious and blessed lot can fall to man by the grace of God, than to confess God the Lord amidst tortures, and in the face of death itself; to confess Christ the Son of God with lacerated body, and with a spirit departing, yet free; and to become fellow-sufferers with

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Christ in the name of Christ? Though we have not yet shed our blood, we are ready to do so. Pray for us, then, dear Cyprian, that the Lord, that best captain, would daily strengthen each one of us more and more, and at last lead us to the field as faithful soldiers, armed with those divine weapons which can never be conquered."

Eighth
and ninth
persecu-
tions.
Gallus,
A.D. 251-
253; and
Valerian,
A.D. 253-
260.

The persecution ceased for the moment at the death of the emperor in 251, but was soon renewed under his successor Gallus, and again under Valerian,—forming the so-called eighth and ninth persecutions. The latter reign was signalized by the martyrdom of two distinguished sufferers, Sixtus II., Bishop of Rome, and the illustrious Cyprian of Carthage, of whom we shall have more to say hereafter. The touching story, too, of Laurentius, the Roman deacon, belongs to this period. When commanded by the governor to deliver up the treasures of the Church, he brought forward the sick, the poor, and the orphans of the congregation, and pointing to them said, "These are our treasures." He was roasted alive on a red hot gridiron. But the time of deliverance is drawing near. Another tremendous struggle more, and the final victory of Christianity and the Church over its great pagan adversary shall have been won. Meanwhile a long breathing time was procured by an edict of Gallienus, the son and successor of Valerian, which accorded to Christians the free exercise of their religion, and, for the first time, at last virtually recognised that religion itself as one of the *religiones licitæ* of the empire.

Another
long
peace.

Forty years of comparative repose now followed, during which the edict of toleration just mentioned was respected by successive emperors, with the single exception of Aurelian, who passed an edict of persecution, but died before it could be carried into effect. Meanwhile the Church grew rapidly in numbers, in wealth, in influence, throughout the whole empire, and the old religion, already

wholly bereft of life, dwindled away. Every day the churches, now rising up with some attempt at outward splendour in the face of day, were more crowded, and the temples and shrines more deserted. Christians were now to be seen everywhere, and in every rank and sphere of life,—in the palace, in the prætorian-guard, in the army, in the circles of rank and fashion. An entire revolution of thought and opinion in regard to religious faith was evidently going on, and everything seemed to indicate the rapidly approaching crisis of the great controversy of hundreds of years. But the very success of the Church was itself its great source of danger. The fanatical adherents of the old faith, still strong in numbers, and in the brute force of tyrant power, were startled and alarmed, and prepared themselves for a last determined contest,—a struggle as for life or death.

The Emperor Dioclesian, who assumed the purple in 284, though a zealous pagan, had yet, from motives of policy or prudence, for many years respected the edict of Gallienus, and left the Christians undisturbed. His own wife, Prisca, and daughter, Valeria, were, it is said, professors of the Christian faith. At last, however, yielding to the persevering urgency of his son-in-law and co-regent, Galerius, a fanatical pagan zealot, he lent his sanction to a measure which has covered his reign, otherwise prosperous, with infamy. Galerius had himself paved the way for decisive action by an arbitrary measure of his own a few years before. He ordained that all the soldiers in the army under his command should, without exception, take part in the sacrifices to the gods, and thus compelled every Christian who would not deny his faith to leave the ranks. Five years later matters were ripe for the decisive blow. At a conference of the emperors, held at Nicomedia, then the imperial residence, in the winter and spring of 303, a definite plan was matured, and the first steps for a war of extermination taken. On the morning

Tenth per-
secution.
Dioclesian,
Galerius,
Maximin

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of July 23, at early dawn, the splendid church of Nicomedia was, by imperial command, broken open, sacked, and levelled with the ground. The next day the expected edict appeared, forbidding all Christian assemblies, ordering the churches to be everywhere demolished, the sacred writings destroyed, and all Christians, of whatever rank, deprived of their offices and civil rights. A brave but over-zealous Christian tore down the hated scroll, and instantly paid the penalty with his life. Another untoward incident speedily followed. A fire broke out in the imperial palace, which Galerius affected to trace to a similar origin, and eagerly seized on as a pretext for measures of increased severity. Meanwhile the fatal edict is traveling quickly over the length and breadth of the empire, awakening the fury of the pagan populace, and carrying dismay into every Christian community, from the Euphrates to the Rhine. The general consternation was increased by the circumstance that in many provinces the edict was proclaimed in the midst of the season of Easter, and thus rang like a death-knell in the ears of Christians, at the very moment they were preparing, with joy and triumph, to celebrate the resurrection of their Lord. Other edicts of ever-increasing severity followed in succession during this and the following year. First the bishops and clergy were to be everywhere seized and imprisoned as ringleaders in treason and impiety. Speedily the dungeons were filled with prisoners of that class. Then followed the third edict, ordaining that every prisoner should be compelled, by every possible means, to sacrifice; and then the fourth and last, extending the stern mandate, hitherto applicable to the clergy alone, indiscriminately to all. The terrible war was now at its height. To every Christian soul there was but the one alternative of immediate apostasy, or torture and death. The fires of martyrdom were blazing, with the exceptions only of Britain, Gaul,

and Spain, throughout the entire bounds of the Roman world.

Amid much in this persecution that was common to those which preceded it, there was one device of the enemy which was distinctly new and original. Not only now were the churches to be broken up, and the pastors cut off or banished, but the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments were to be searched out, seized, and committed to the flames. Every copy of the Holy volume, and every fragment of it, was, if possible, to be banished from the world. There was, at least, in this idea a kind of fiendish sagacity. It struck, at last, at the root of the matter; and could it only have struck successfully, would doubtless have struck effectually and fatally. Hitherto the persecutors had only lopped off the branches, now they have found the root,—and the main root at last. Congregations before had been broken up, scattered, decimated; but new members rose up in the room of their martyred brethren, and the flocks rallied again stronger than ever, when the storm was past. Pastors were cut off by fire or sword, but other pastors as brave and faithful were ready to take their places. Martyr succeeded martyr in the same episcopal chair in long succession, and yet never was there wanting a man ready to accept the dangerous distinction. That plan, then, had failed. The field had been mown down again and again, but again and again a new harvest, richer than ever, had sprung up from the old seed. But now let that seed itself be destroyed. Let the Bible, from which the Church sprung, be itself annihilated, and the Church will speedily die out, and perish utterly from the earth. This subtle device had but one defect. It could not possibly be carried into effect. The sacred treasure was in too many hands, and too many of those hands were brave and faithful, to make any such attempt at extermination practicable. The precious deposit,

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watched over by an omniscient providence, was in the guardianship of thousands of true hearts, that would rather die than betray the trust. As it was, the measure was but very partially carried out. Many governors scarcely made a serious attempt to execute it. Either from friendly feelings to individual ecclesiastics, or more probably from an utter inability to comprehend the importance of getting possession of a few obscure and worthless manuscripts, they prosecuted the business often with a slack and careless hand, readily accepting any writings that were offered to them, without inquiring whether they were the required documents or not. A few copies only here and there were delivered up by unfaithful hands; and the traitors were branded by the Church as a new class of apostates, under the name of *Traditores*.

The death-
struggle.

Now, as on former occasions, the great engine of persecution was torture, and the aim rather to turn away believers from their steadfastness than to take their lives; but as in thousands of instances the confessors stood steadfast to the last, these tortures were in the result only a more lingering and agonizing form of death. The Church at this time seems to have been better prepared for the day of trial than in the former persecution under Decius, and the number of defections was accordingly smaller, and of triumphant martyrdoms greater. The details of blood and horror are so dreadful that they would scarce admit of belief, did they not rest on the unimpeachable authority of a contemporary.¹ There may be a tinge of rhetorical description in the pictures which Eusebius gives of the sufferings of his brethren, but his substantial veracity cannot be called in question. The flesh creeps as we read the horrible recital of mutilation and torture. They were scourged, he tells us, till the flesh came off from the bones, and then vinegar and salt

¹ See Eusebius, *Hist Ecc.*, Bb. viii.-x.: as also, Lactantius *de Mortibus Persecutorum*.

were poured into the wounds. They were tied to millstones, and sunk in the sea. They were stretched upon the rack till all their limbs were wrenched asunder. They were suspended by one arm, or hung in chains, till the sharp edges of the links cut the flesh; or fastened naked to the boughs of contiguous trees bent together, and then torn asunder by the quick rebound. Their fingers were pierced with sharp awls, from the nail downwards. Boiling oil, glowing and bubbling, was poured along the hollow of their naked back. They were consumed with slow fires—sometimes suspended with their head downwards, and the fire kindled beneath. Tender maidens were exposed to brutal dishonour, and not seldom sought refuge from a horrid fate in voluntary death. Whole families were sacrificed at once. Great fires were kindled, in order, by whole hecatombs of victims, to expedite the work of death. Ten, thirty, sixty were slain at a time,—men, women, and children. In one case an entire Christian town was first surrounded by a cordon of armed men, and then given, with all its inhabitants, to the flames. At last the horrid work began to flag. Men and wild beasts paused through very satiety of slaughter. “The very swords themselves,” says Eusebius, “at length became blunt and broken, being worn out with use. The executioners grew weary and gave over their functions; but the Christians, till the last breath of their life, sang songs of praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God.”

In truth this last and fiercest war against the Lamb and against his true followers had proved, like all that went before it, a failure in the conviction even of its savage promoters themselves. At one time, indeed, they had exulted as in an assured triumph, and had already added to the imperial titles a name commemorative of the utter extinction of the Christian name, and the full restoration of the ancient faith of Rome. But this vain boast issued only in discomfiture and mockery. The fires

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—

burned, but the Church lived amid the flames, and was only the more proved to be indestructible. A fresh attempt, indeed, was made by Maximin, a fierce pagan, who now entered the imperial line as colleague to Galerius, to revive the slumbering fires. In the very frenzy of fanatic zeal he ordained that eatables of every kind sold in the market should be sprinkled with sacrificial water or wine, that every one might be compelled thus either to participate in the pagan rites or starve. This was in the year 308. Two years afterwards we find the work of death still going on—doubtless under the same auspices—in Palestine, where we hear of thirty-nine confessors beheaded at once. That, however, was the last blood spilt in this dreadful time. The very year after, Galerius, the original author of the persecution himself, brought at last to his senses by a dreadful disease, gave orders for its final discontinuance. He confessed that the design he had in view of exterminating the Christian faith had failed, and that he had accordingly resolved to tolerate a worship which he could not suppress; stipulating only that the Christians should in their sacred assemblies pray for the welfare of their rulers and of the empire. But the time was at hand when the despised faith of the Cross was not to be a tolerated sect only, but the dominant and triumphant religion of the world. The sun of Constantine is already risen, and with it the dawn of a new day for the Church and for the world. Succeeding his father, Constantius, in the provinces of Gaul, Britain, and Spain, where, like him, he pursued a policy of toleration towards the Christians, he is now in full march at the head of victorious legions towards Rome, where, conquering all adversaries, he enthrones himself in the old palace of the Cæsars. His first act is to issue a proclamation of peace and protection to the Christian Church, dated from Milan, in the year 313. A few years more, and all his remaining

rivals are gone, and he remains undisputed master of the whole Roman world.

CHAPTER

III.

The outward conflict of the Church with the brute force of imperial heathenism is at an end ; henceforth her struggles, never finally to cease till the consummation of all things against the powers and principles of evil, will be of another, but it may be not less formidable kind.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FATHERS OF THE MARTYR AGE.

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AMONGST the more prominent men of the Martyr Church there are five which stand out conspicuously in the literature of the times as her intellectual leaders and guides. They are the chief spokesmen of her inner life, as they were also amongst the foremost and bravest of her actors. They are emphatically representative men; each stands as the type of a class, each occupies a most intimate relation with some one of the leading phases of the intellectual and spiritual struggles of the age. The biography of their lives is also the theological history of their times. Availing ourselves of this fact, we shall in the present chapter combine those two subjects, interspersing with the few but precious lines of personal reminiscence which history has preserved to us, such rapid sketches of contemporary doctrines and controversies as the limits of this history will permit.

The names and the subjects which thus fall to be grouped together are the following:—I. Justin Martyr, and Christian apologetics; II. Irenæus, and the Gnostic controversy; III. Origen, and the Alexandrian theology; IV. Tertullian, and the Montanistic movement; V. Cyprian, and the dogma of the Church.

JUSTIN
MARTYR.

I. FLAVIUS JUSTINUS, surnamed, almost from his own time, by honourable pre-eminence, “the philosopher and martyr,” was born, about the close of the first century, at Flavia Neapolis, the ancient Sychem, in Palestine. He thus first drew breath, just at the time when the last of the apostles was quitting the scene. The circumstance was almost significant. Sanctified human culture was preparing quickly to take the place of the divine super-

natural light that was passing away. He was of heathen extraction, and heathen though liberal education. From a very early period, however, he had become a seeker after truth. Disdaining the wild fables and the rank superstitions of the reigning popular religions, he sought, in the schools of philosophy and in converse with other inquiring spirits around him, that deeper wisdom which was hid from the blinded many. He looked around him on every side for light, wistfully groping after God amid the dim shadows, if peradventure he might find him. He betook himself now to one school of heathen sages, now to another, and was a disciple of the Stoics, of the Peripatetics, and of the Pythagoreans by turns. In the restlessness of unsatisfied longing, he travelled from land to land and from city to city in the prosecution of the same all-absorbing quest. Now he is at Rome, now at Athens, now at Alexandria, but ever on the same errand, ever wrestling with the same mighty problems, which in those days were at once the puzzle and the torment of the struggling reason and the yearning heart. In him the kingdom of heaven was in very deed like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls. At last, in the sublime reveries of the Platonic school, he seemed to himself to stand on the threshold of the great discovery; to be on the very eve of the elect soul's promised fruition,—the intuitive and ineffable vision of God. He stood on the threshold, but the gate of life opened not; he remained a seeker and unsatisfied still. It was about this time that his attention was powerfully attracted to the Christian religion and its professors by the sublime constancy and calm triumphant deaths of the martyrs in behalf of that truth which they believed that they had found, but which he was only seeking. Can these be the professors, he thought, of that vile and ignoble superstition of which he had so often heard, and whose secret orgies of brutal licentiousness had become the scoff and byword

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of the civilized world?¹ His traditionary faith was shaken, and many thoughts stirred within him, but as yet without any definite result. But the set time came at last. Walking one day in solitary reverie by the seashore, he encountered an old man of mild and reverend aspect, who, recognising in his customary garb the badge of a professed seeker after truth, at once accosted him, and entered into converse with him in regard to those great questions which it is the business of the true wisdom to resolve. With skilful hand he touched the deepest springs of the young man's heart, pointing out what human philosophy had promised and what it had done, and where it had failed. He directed him to the inspired Scriptures as the one source of sure and certain knowledge. "It is there," said he, "that you will find everything which it concerns you to know for the attainment of true happiness. But above all," he added, "ask of God to open your heart to the light, for without the will of God and of his Son Jesus Christ, it is not given to any man to attain the truth." The heart of Justin burned within him as he listened to the words of one who spoke to him as none had ever spoken before, and he lost no time in obeying the counsel of his venerable teacher. He searched the Scriptures, and in them found "that he had eternal life." In the sublime oracles of the Old Testament prophets, in their fulfilment in the gospel history, and above all in the words and works of Jesus himself, who spake as never man spake, and lived as never man lived before, he recognised the clear impress of a divine original, and his eyes gradually opened to the discovery of the one pearl of great price which he had sought so long. Thenceforth the gospel was enthroned as the true sovereign of his soul, and gloried in, in life and in death, as "the only true philosophy."

¹ See page 86.

Having found the truth, his one business in life hereafter was to publish and advance it. "Every one," said he, "who can preach the truth, and does not preach it, incurs the judgment of God," and his whole existence, from his conversion to his martyrdom, was a living commentary on the words. As before he had travelled the world over in the search after truth, so now he did the same in proclaiming the truth when found. The merchantman who had so earnestly sought the goodly pearl, was never weary of displaying it and commending to other seekers round. He still retained as of old his philosopher's cloak,¹ and followed, as before, the profession of an itinerant philosophic teacher, only that now he spoke with the authority of one who not only loved but possessed the true wisdom. Day by day might he be seen in the crowded thoroughfare of some of the great cities of the empire, and most often of Rome itself, discoursing to eager groups of listeners and inquirers of the deep things of God, literally realizing the inspired picture of the celestial wisdom which crieth without and lifteth up her voice in the streets. The idle passers-by were attracted by the well-known garb which they revered in their own heathen teachers, and approaching with a prejudice in his favour, saluted him with "Hail, sage philosopher;"² and waited to hear what he had to say about that new wisdom from the east. Of the details of those labours of faith and love, and of their success, no record has been preserved; but from the deep impress which his name and character left upon his age, and the fragrance of grateful and reverential memory which lingered behind him in the Church, we cannot doubt that he was one of the most influential instruments of his time in advancing the kingdom of God. To his oral testimony in behalf of the truth, he added abundant and effective labours in the sphere of Christian literature. A dialogue with the

¹ Τρίβων, Τριβώνιον, Pallium.² Φιλόσοφε χαιρε.

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Jew Trypho,¹ and two "apologies" or defences of the Christian faith addressed respectively to the emperors Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, still survive from amidst a mass of other writings, either lost or of doubtful authenticity, to attest the learning, the eloquence, and the holy ardour with which he pled the cause he loved before the great tribunal of the world. An activity so great and so conspicuous could not fail to attract the attention and arouse the hostility of the pagan authorities and populace, but it was not until the terrible days of Marcus Aurelius that the blow which had been so long impending was struck at last. On the accusation of a cynic philosopher of the name of Crescens, whose jealous animosity he had incurred, he was arraigned with six others before the heathen tribunal on a charge of contempt for the gods, and condemned to die. His final testimony and calm triumphant end were worthy of his life, and constituted his best and most powerful "apology." Being asked ironically by the prefect if he believed that after his decapitation he would ascend to heaven, "I am so sure," he replied, "of the grace which Jesus Christ hath obtained for me that not a shadow of doubt can enter my mind." He was commanded instantly to sacrifice to the gods. He refused, saying, "We desire nothing better than to suffer for our Lord Jesus Christ; for this gives us salvation and joyfulness before his dreadful judgment seat, at which all the world must stand." These were his last words.

It was at Rome in the year 166 that, like the great apostle of the Gentiles, whose character in many respects he resembled, he fell like a Roman citizen by the headsmen's axe, and thus won the martyr's crown, together with the honoured name by which he has been ever since known and revered in the Church of God.

Justin was only the chief of a numerous band of

¹ A little after A.D. 139.

learned apologists, who were at this period raised up to meet the call of the times by the intellectual and scientific advocacy of the Christian cause. Quadratus,¹ Bishop of Athens, Aristides, and Athenagoras,² philosophers of the same city, Aristo of Pella, Melito² of Sardis, Claudius Apollinaris² of Hierapolis, Miltiades,² Tatian³ of Assyria, Theophilus of Antioch,⁴ Origen of Alexandria, Tertullian of Carthage,—such were only the leading names in the muster-roll of a great army which in those days fought the battle of the faith with the weapons of learned research and cultured reason. The numerous apologies, of greater or less intellectual power, which thus appeared have most of them long since perished, but from the character of those which survive we may easily form an idea of the general substance of the argument which they all maintained. In its main features it did not differ widely from the line of advocacy generally followed to this day. The external evidence of miracle⁵ and prophecy, the intrinsic excellence and purity of the gospel doctrine itself, its adaptation to all the deeper wants of man and fulfilment alike of human longings and divine oracles and promises, its marvellous efficacy in purifying, elevating, healing, and strengthening the soul, its might in weakness, its victorious progress in the face of persecution and of martyrdom, the very “testimony of the soul”⁶ itself, whensoever it awakes from its dreams, and its own natural unperverted voice is heard—such were the main pleas of the great argument then, just as they are now. In the mode of presenting that argument there was often of course much

CHAPTER

IV.

The early
apologists

¹ A disciple of the apostles, and flourished in the reign of Hadrian.

² Under Marcus Aurelius.

³ A pupil of Justin, but afterwards fell into Gnostic errors, and founded the sect of the Encratites.

⁴ Ob. 181. His work addressed to an educated heathen friend, named Autolyceus, displays classic culture, philosophic acumen, and graphic power.

⁵ In Justin's day the Christian miracles seem to have been scarcely ever questioned *as facts*, but only traced by Pagan adversaries to magical arts.

⁶ *Testimonium Animæ naturaliter Christianæ*—the title of a very remarkable apologetic work of Tertullian.

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of human imperfection and weakness. In particular, we often find in the writings of the best authors of that age an uncritical facility in the admission of facts, and an almost puerile fancifulness in the use of arguments, which to a modern reader detracts much from their force and cogency. Those, however, were the faults, not of the men, but of the age, and left untouched the intrinsic merits of the cause they pled, and which, spite of all the resources of philosophic subtlety and keen-witted ridicule arrayed against it, gradually conquered for itself a place, not only in the affection and reverence, but in the deepest convictions of the world.

IRENÆUS.

II. IRENÆUS, bishop of the Church of Lyons, in southern Gaul, and the great champion of the anti-Gnostic controversy, was a junior contemporary of Justin. At the time the one was witnessing his last confession at Rome, the other was probably just entering on his early ministry in the provincial city. He was already a leading member of the Church, and had been ordained as a presbyter by the venerable Pothinus when the terrible persecution broke out in 177. Though, from circumstances of which we know nothing, his lot was early cast in the west, and by far the most important part of his life was spent there, he was by birth a native of Asia Minor and had been brought up at the feet of the saintly Polycarp, the contemporary and disciple of the apostle John. Vividly and fondly, in long after years, did Irenæus recall those happy days of his youth, and the wonder and awe with which he heard the old man tell of the words and the deeds of holy apostles and evangelists who had just a little before passed away from earth, and with whom he was the one remaining connecting link. The very spot where in those days he used to sit and discourse, the way in which he entered and went out, his manner and gait, all remained impressed

on his memory to his dying day. At the time of the persecution he was absent at Rome, on an honourable mission of conciliation in connection with the Montanistic controversy, and returned just in time to witness the scene of desolation which the recent massacre had left behind. It is to his pen, perhaps, that we owe the touching record of those days of trial which was sent in name of the Church to their brethren in Asia Minor, and from which we have quoted in a former chapter. He was at once chosen to fill the vacant seat of the martyred Pothinus, and thenceforth occupied that prominent place of influence and authority in the universal Church that of right belonged to him. For thirty-four years he ruled his Church and fed his flock with exemplary diligence, fidelity, and loving zeal. He was at once the pastor, the bishop, the missionary, and the bold defender of the faith. Combining in a rare degree the thoughtful depth of the East with the practical tact and energy of the Western mind, he was at once the theologian and the Churchman, and formed a mediating power between the diverse and opposing tendencies of his age. Of a spirit at once mild and firm, conciliatory in lesser points, and uncompromising in essential matters of the faith,¹ he was in his age what the last of the apostles had been in his—by turns the gentle disciple of love and the stout Boanerges of the truth. He died, as it has been supposed, as a martyr, in the reign of Septimius Severus, in the year A.D. 202.

The great work of his life was the defence of the pure gospel of Christ against the insidious and pernicious theories of the Gnostics, which had just before reached their climax of bold and impious speculation, and threatened to sap the very foundations of the Christian faith. The

Gnosti-
cism.

¹ This character was conspicuously displayed both in the Montanistic controversy in the days of the Roman bishop Eleutherus, and in the Easter controversy under Victor—in each of which he holds the middle ground of uncompromising decision in essentials, and charitable forbearance in minor matters.

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nature and drift of those speculations are generally indicated by the name. They aimed at a religion of *knowledge* (*γνῶσις*), in contradistinction to the common religion of *faith*. Not content with the simple and authoritative answer to the most urgent questions of humanity—"What shall I do to be saved?" "How shall man be just with God?"—they aspired to nothing less than a universal Christian philosophy, which should explain all mysteries and solve all problems concerning heaven and earth, God and man, time and eternity. Mistaking the tree of knowledge for the tree of life, they toiled in vain to climb its slippery stem and to pluck the fruit, which here, at least, is beyond the reach of mortal hand. The questions with which they wrestled, and which lay at the basis of all their endless theories, were such as are common to speculative minds of every age, and which remain to this day unsolved—"What is the origin of the world, of sin, of the mingling and struggling of good and evil, light and darkness, life and death, everywhere around us? What is the relation between God and man, the created and the uncreated? What is to come of the world, of humanity, of the universe?" To such questions as these, which the toils of many centuries have long since proved insoluble, and which the wisest minds, accordingly, are content to leave as they are, till the Omniscient himself shall please to lift the veil, the more speculative spirits of that age flew with an eager interest of which we can now scarcely form a conception—not in the desire only, but in the sanguine hope, to grasp the book of mystery, and unloose all its seals. In the lack of solid data for investigation, their great instrument of speculation was an unbridled poetic fancy. Driven perforce from the world of realities, they betook themselves to the world of dreams, and built up their systems out of the airy nothings they met with there. Availing themselves of the existing materials of speculative

thought they found ready to their hand, in the Oriental theosophy, the Grecian philosophy, and the facts of the gospel history, they fashioned them by the plastic power of a speculative fancy into systems as varied, as unsubstantial, and sometimes also as gorgeous, as the cloud scenery of an evening sky. Our space forbids any detail of their endless schools and sects,¹ or even a bare enumeration of their favourite teachers; but a general line of thought runs, more or less distinctly, through them all, which may be thus briefly sketched:—There is one primal source of being, the absolute and infinite God, the eternal “deep,”² the eternal “silence,”³ dwelling for evermore apart in the solitude of his own unapproachable essence, beyond the sphere of time and change. From him the universe sprang, not by creation, but by emanation. From the depths of his eternal being there went forth before all worlds, in sublime procession, a series of immortal essences or æons,⁴ rays from the one essential and everlasting light, each partaking of the divine life of their eternal Father, but in measure diminishing with their distance in order of birth from the primal source of all. These æons, to which were given such names as mind, reason, power, truth, life,⁵ and which were manifestly but the impersonated conceptions of the divine attributes and energies coming forth into manifestation, were figured according to the taste of the different theorists, now as going forth single, now in pairs joined together in a kind of transcendental, heavenly wedlock.⁶ Together they constituted the Pleroma,⁷ or divine fulness—the bright spirit-world of light and life, which the eternal Father vivifies and irradiates evermore with his ineffable and beatific presence. That is the true world, of which that

¹ See, however, for such details, in Appendix—*Gnostic Teachers and Sects*.

² Βυθός.

³ Σιγή.

⁴ Αἰών, a space or period of time; an age or generation; a long period of time; eternity.—*L. and S.'s Greek Lexicon*.

⁵ Νῦνς, λόγος, σοφία, δύναμις, ἀλήθεια, ζωή, &c.

⁶ Συζυγίαι.

⁷ Πλήρωμα, opposed to κένωμα, the region of night and nothingness.

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which we see is but the dark and unsubstantial shadow. As, however, the effulgence of the divine effluence diminishes with the distance from the central Source, there is necessarily a point on the far outskirts where light melts into darkness, and a dim region of twilight gloom forms the border land between the realms of life and death, being and no being, fulness and nothingness. It was here that the nether world took its origin. From that intermediate region between the spheres of good and evil went forth the lowest and the weakest of the æons, as the Demiurgus,¹ or world-creator, and built up with such materials as he could find, and with the dim light and limited powers which he possessed, that visible frame of creation which we now behold, and which bears the traces alike of the greatness and of the imperfection of its architect. Hence the constant struggle of good and evil, life and death, matter and spirit, with which all creation groans—betraying everywhere the handiwork of one who wrought in a great measure blindly, and while making much, could make nothing perfect. So the whole was in great measure a failure, an abortion. With the blind elements of rude matter with which he mainly wrought, were mingled some scanty germs of a higher origin—some faint, struggling rays of immortal life from the world of light above. This constituted the true soul of the world, and especially of its higher rational forms, whose twofold nature seemed to divide them between the realms of light and darkness. This higher life in a dead material frame—this “nether wisdom”² drawn from the upper sphere—was, as it were, an alien and an exile here. So, wherever it was found, it was ever pining after its true home, chafing with its prison bars, and struggling to be free. Some had more of that divine element, some less; some were *spiritual*³ men, some *psychical*,⁴ some *carnal*,⁵ accord-

¹ Δημιουργός, a term used by Plato in a similar sense.

² Κάτω Σοφία.

³ Πνευματικοί.

⁴ Ψυχικοί.

⁵ Σωματικοί, φυσικοί, σαρκικοί, υλικοί.

ing as the higher or the lower principle had the ascendancy, or both ruled with equal sway within the soul. To the first class belonged all the elect and aspiring souls of every age and country; to the second, the Jews and all other votaries of a merely moral and legal system; to the last, the sensual herd, that live and die like the beasts that perish, and are the worthless offscourings of the world. It was to the middle sphere that the Demiurgus and his regime belonged. He was the peculiar god of the Jews, the founder of their national polity and distinctive economy of legal and ceremonial ordinances, which, like the creation itself, bore the impress of a great but limited intelligence. To perfect that economy, as well as to deliver his people from their enemies, he had promised them a Messiah according to his own views, whom the Jews, understanding the promise correctly as he intended, ardently expected. It was in these circumstances that the divine Redeemer came into the world, not to fulfil the Jewish expectation, but take advantage of it. The first and the brightest of all the immortal æons, he came to deliver the spirit-born of every land from the cruel bondage in which they had been held. Pitying alike the subjects of the stern Demiurgus and the slaves of material nature, he came to break their bonds and set them free. Assuming the semblance of a human form—for the essential pravity of matter forbade his assuming more—that as a man he might converse with man on earth, he revealed to them the true *gnosis*, woke up within them the slumbering spark of higher intelligence, and taught their souls to rise to the supreme eternal God, whom as yet they knew not. The carnal-minded Jews scorned that pure spiritual doctrine, and in murderous rage rose against its august teacher; but his celestial nature forbade that he should die, save in illusive appearance. So while the frenzied crowd were shouting in mockery, and feasting their eyes, as they deemed, on

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his dying agonies, he had passed already out of sight, and ascended to God, whither he will, in the due time, lead all those who are like-minded with him, and who long and pine for that bright clime whither he has gone before.¹

Such in substance was the system, bright but unsubstantial, in which fact and fiction, Christian ideas and heathen fancies and dreams are so strangely mingled together, which in those days supplanted in many speculative minds the simple gospel of Christ, and which exercised a certain fascination over many who did not fully embrace it. One can easily imagine the indignant recoil with which an earnest believer like Irenæus must have regarded such wild and misty reveries. One who leant like him on the warm bosom of the "Word made flesh," could not but turn with scorn from that vain jargon of immortal æons and illusive phantasms, and almost cry out with her of old, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." To its refutation and extermination, therefore, he devoted his life, and his greatest extant work² on the subject remains a monument of the sanctified learning, energy, and zeal which he consecrated to the task.

Scripture
and tradi-
tion.

His weapons were two-fold,—the testimony of the word, and the testimony of the Church. In the one he found the one infallible source and test of the truth; in the

¹ The student will observe that the whole of these wild theories revolve around one or two root-principles, which run more or less through them all, namely, 1. The doctrine of emanations (*προβολή*, emanatio); 2. Of dualism, or the co-existence of two eternal powers of good and evil, with the connected theory of the essential pravity of matter (*ύλη*), as belonging to the latter sphere; 3. Of the Logos (*Λόγος*); 4. The Demiurgus.

² *Ἐλεγχος καὶ ἀνατροπὴ τῆς ψευδωνόμου γνώσεως*, existing in a complete form only in a Latin translation, under the title *Adversus Hæreses*, in five books. Of his other works a few fragments alone survive,—namely, 1. From a letter against Flovinus, on the origin of evil and the unity of God; 2. From another letter to the Roman Bishop Victor, on the Easter question; 3. From another to Blastus, on schism; 4. From a treatise on the peculiarities of the style of St. Paul; 5. On the "true knowledge" (*γνώσις ἀληθινή*); 6. On the Eucharist; 7. On the duty of forbearance in subordinate points of difference; 9. On the design of the Incarnation.

other its living witness. What the Scriptures taught, and which the heretics could not disguise, save by mutilation or interpolation, the Church throughout all the world with one voice proclaimed. While error was various, endless, truth was but one, and spoke alike from every page of the apostolic writings and from every episcopal see of the apostolic Churches. On the latter of these two arguments he lays perhaps more stress than is consistent with our prevailing Protestant views of tradition and the Church; yet we are to remember that in those days, within two generations of the death of St. John, the oral witness of the Churches, and even of individual teachers, really possessed a validity as evidence of the actual doctrine of apostolic men and apostolic times which could not in after ages belong to it. That evanescent writing on the sands of time might be read then, though the tides of a thousand years have long since swept it away. The Church, too, whose witness he invoked, was not the mere hierarchy, but the living body of faithful and holy men. "Wherever the Church is," says he, "there is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit is, there is the Church," thus striking at the root alike of sectarian division and of ecclesiastical despotism at once. Yet there is, perhaps, something significant, as has been remarked by Neander, in the order in which these two ideas stand in his mind, as indicating the first germs of a false ecclesiasticism.¹ As it was, the blow was well aimed, and effectually did its work. A few more strokes from such strong hands as that of his accomplished disciple Hippolytus² and the brawny African, Tertullian, and

Hippoly-
tus.

¹ History of Christian Dogmas, vol. i. pp. 220, 221—Bohn's Edition.

² Bishop of Portus (or the burgh town of the Harbour of Rome), and, like the other suburbicarian bishops (*cardinales episcopi*), a member of the Roman Presbytery, or Episcopal Council, in which he took a leading and influential part during the episcopates of Zephyrinus and Callistus. The recent discovery of his great work, the *Philosophumena*, or "Refutation of all Heresies," constitutes an era in literary history, and has not only shed a flood of light on the ecclesiastical history of that age, but has transformed Hippolytus himself from a mere legendary name into a veritable and imposing historical personage. A mutilated marble

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the great upas tree with all its branches tottered to its fall. We find, indeed, lingering traces of the Gnostic spirit in after centuries, but as a prevailing phase of the intellectual life of the world, it had for ever passed away. "The system on the whole was merely an expiring effort of philosophic and poetic paganism, exhibiting the brilliant colours of the dolphin as it dies. It was the morning mist, as it were, the fog that had settled on the world, during the long night of heathen darkness, breaking up into gorgeous clouds before the sun of Christianity, reflecting in varied hues the light before which it fled, and, it may be added, carrying off along with it much of the miasma with which the spiritual atmosphere had been so long infected."

ORIGEN.

III. While the venerable Irenæus was quitting the scene, another still brighter spirit, and one destined to exercise a yet more powerful influence on the whole course of Christian thought in that and after times, was just entering on the stage of public life. It was in the year 203, the one immediately succeeding that in which Irenæus died, that ORIGEN was summoned, at the early age of eighteen, by the bishop Demetrius, to take the direction of the catechetical school, or rather theological seminary, at Alexandria. That important institution, at first a mere preparatory class for the instruction of catechumens in the elements of the Christian faith, had, in the course of successive generations, and under the presidency of successive distinguished teachers, grown into a commanding centre of sacred learning and scientific Christian philosophy. The

The cate-
chetical
school.

statue of this father, exhumed in 1551 from a grave vault on the Via Tiburtina, exhibiting a venerable man robed in a Greek pallium and Roman toga, seated on an episcopal chair, on the back of which is engraven his paschal cycle and a list of his writings, assists us in forming a life-like idea of the man and of the age. He died a martyr for the truth, after having been sent in exile to the island of Sardinia, in the reign of Maximinus, about the year 235. See especially "Hippolytus and his Age," by the Chevalier Bunsen, whose views in regard to the history and position of Hippolytus we regard as conclusively established, and have here adopted.

influx of converts of every age and rank, from the midst of a community which had served itself heir to all the science and philosophy of the world, had necessitated, on the part of the Church, a scientific development and profound investigation of the first principles of her faith, unknown in earlier times. For that great work suitable instruments were in the providence of God raised up. The first notable name was that of Pantænus, a converted stoic philosopher, who occupied the presidential chair with great success and wide renown about the year 180, and quitted it only to carry the message of the Cross as a missionary apostle to the far east. To him succeeded one who, if not more distinguished, is at least better known to us from the valuable and extensive writings he has left behind. This was Titus Flavius Clemens, born, some say at Athens, others at Alexandria, of heathen parents. Of liberal classic education and large culture, he had been for long, like Justin, a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, till at last he found the pearl of great price in Christ. He succeeded Pantænus, whom he had chosen as his master, in the catechetical school about the year 189, and continued his labours there, discoursing by turns of theology, philosophy, geometry, grammar, rhetoric, amid crowds of admiring pupils until 202, when the dangers of that stormy time compelled him to withdraw. In his philosophic system he was rather an eclectic than the follower of any exclusive school, and delighted to gather in the spoils of all human thought and learning and lay them at the foot of the Cross. Three theological works, one for heathen inquirers,¹ one for catechumens,² and one for more advanced believers,³ as well as a practical treatise on the use and abuse of riches,⁴ remain as monuments of his sanctified genius and learning, and though distinguished often rather for freshness

Pantænus

Clemens.

¹ Δόγος προτρεπτικός.² Παιδαγωγός.³ Στρωματεῖς, or miscellanies.⁴ Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος πλούσιος; Quis dives salvus—a commentary on Mark x. 17, seq.

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and affluence of thought than for rigid consistency and discrimination, constitute one of the most precious literary legacies of primitive Christian times. The rest of his life was spent chiefly in Cæsarea and Jerusalem in the Holy Land, and terminated about the year A.D. 220.

But the name and fame of the Alexandrian school was carried to its highest point by the indomitable energy¹ and brilliant genius of the man who now became its chief ornament and informing spirit. Born of Christian parents, and baptized while yet a child, the young Origen had been, in the highest sense, planted in the house of the Lord, and gave very early tokens not only of precocious genius, but of that Divine grace which is better than all knowledge and all gifts. From a child he was deeply versed in the Holy Scriptures, committing whole sections of it to memory, and surprising his teachers with profound questions which baffled the wisest to answer. So singular and blessed a spirit of sanctity shone through all his young life, that his father, the martyr Leonidas, regarded him with a kind of wondering awe, and would sometimes, in the silent night, steal to the couch of his sleeping child, and reverently kiss his breast, as a manifest temple of the Holy Ghost. He was only seventeen years of age when that precious parent was removed from him, leaving him the only guardian and support of a widowed mother and six helpless children. But his brave heart quailed not. To the prison where the martyr was awaiting his final combat, he sent a message of good cheer, imploring him to stand fast in the hour of trial, and not to swerve for any fear for those he had left behind. With youthful ardour he even coveted his father's lot, and was only withheld from pressing forward to share his bloody baptism by the ingenious providence of his mother, who kept him in the house by hiding his clothes. Again and again afterwards did he show his martyr

¹ Hence surnamed *Αδαμάντιος, χαλκέντερος*.

heart, by bravely standing beside his pupils and friends before the heathen tribunal, visiting them in the prison, and daring the enemy to do their worst. On his appointment to the catechetical chair, he devoted the whole energy and resources of his mind to a work which became henceforth the business of his life; and that he might be the better able either to combat the philosophies of the world, or to use them in the service of Christ, he became himself their earnest student in their best authors and in their best schools. With this view he attended the lectures of the celebrated Ammonius Saccas, the founder of the new Platonic sect.¹ His devotion in the pursuit of all learning, and especially the highest and the holiest learning, was indomitable and almost superhuman. Partaking largely of the ascetic tendency characteristic of the age, he sternly denied himself all the pleasures of the flesh, that he might give himself wholly to the life of the spirit. He fasted often, slept little, abjured wine and all delicate food, denied himself even every comfort that was not strictly necessary, and thus braced himself to endure hardness as a true athlete in the service of Christ. His long nightly vigils, interrupted only by a brief repose on the bare floor, were divided between prayer and the profound and earnest study of the sacred word. His activity and versatility were almost incredible. While discharging all the duties of his calling with unexampled zeal and success, he refused all remuneration for his labour, and supported himself the while by selling manuscripts, mostly copied by his own hand. When more favourable circumstances enabled him to devote himself more entirely to independent literary labour, he kept seven amanuenses employed at once in taking down the fruits of his prolific mind, and others in copying and multiplying the manuscripts. Meanwhile, to his other vast attainments he had added the accomplishment, rare in those days, of a knowledge

¹ See Appendix—*The New Platonic School*.

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of the Hebrew language, and had made journeys, in pursuit of knowledge, to Rome (211), to Arabia, to Palestine, and Greece. He was honoured in bringing many distinguished heathens and heretics to the Christian faith—among others, a wealthy Gnostic named Ambrosius, who threw open to him the rich treasures of an extensive library, besides furnishing to him in other ways the means of more effectually prosecuting his learned labours.

The latter years of his life were painfully tried and chequered. Incurring the jealous animosity of his bishop and early patron, Demetrius, who could not bear the splendour of so great a light so near his throne, he was tried for heresy and certain alleged violations of ecclesiastical law, in two synods held in 231 and 232. He was condemned, deposed, and excommunicated. For the former charge there was some colourable pretext. The teeming thoughts of so prolific and so creative a mind on all subjects, human and divine, could not be always kept within the limits of a simple traditional faith; nor, indeed, did there then exist those clear and well-weighed definitions of the great fundamental verities which in after times staked off the boundaries of the known and the unknown, the safe and the unsafe in speculation. So, while wiser than any other man of his time in the things that are written, we find him often also striving to be wise above what is written, and, in the eagerness of speculative ardour, discoursing of such high themes as the nature of creation, the origin of evil, the ultimate issues of redemption, and the final destiny of mankind and the world, with a perilous freedom, which, probably, at an after age he would not have used. The very task, too, to which his life was devoted—of reconciling Christianity with true philosophy, and investigating the relations of the highest knowledge with all other knowledge—had its own peculiar dangers. There was a strong temptation to mould and fashion Christian truth in accordance with

philosophic ideas and traditions—to harmonize the thoughts of God and the thoughts of man by assimilating or confounding them. Thus, in Origen's hands, it too often seems as if Christ were yielding up as much to Plato as Plato to Christ, and as if the true gnosis for which he pleads bore too close a family likeness to the false gnosis he seeks to supplant. At the same time, it must never be forgotten that his personal attachment to Christ and his gospel were, from first to last, ardent and unquestionable; that in the great central article of the faith—the incarnation of the eternal Word—he was fundamentally sound,¹ and, indeed, in clearness of conception and definition, beyond his age; and that, with all his imperfections and aberrations, he did more to quicken and to fructify Christian thought, and to lay the deep foundations of a mature and fully-developed theology, than any other uninspired man before the great Nicene age. The other charge was founded on the circumstance of his having received, a short time before, ordination as a presbyter, notwithstanding of certain disqualifications, at the hands of two foreign bishops. The result was his enforced withdrawal from Alexandria and the loved scene of his labours there, only, however, to resume those labours in a new home and in a new school, which soon, in fame and influence, outshone the old. Cæsarea—the place where he had first opened his lips in the Church, and whose bishop had laid his hands upon his head—joyfully welcomed the man whom Alexandria had cast out, and became henceforth the honoured sphere of his studies and his labours. His fame and his authority were now at their highest pitch. Though anathematized by his own Church, and by that of Rome, which accepted and confirmed the sentence, he was honoured everywhere else as the chiefest pillar of the faith. He was summoned to ecclesiastical councils to decide controversies and to

¹ We say *fundamentally*; for here, as everywhere else, he was the bold pioneer of unexplored territory, rather than the careful cultivator of ground already cleared and possessed.

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SECOND.

convince heretics. In an Arabian synod, the bishop, Beryllus of Bostra, overcome by his arguments, renounced the erroneous views he had maintained on the subject of the Trinity, and returned to the orthodox faith. His correspondence with the most eminent men of his time was immense, and included, among others, the Roman emperor, Philip the Arabian, whom he is even supposed by some to have converted to the Christian faith.¹ At last, the elevation of his pupil and friend Dionysius to the see of Alexandria opened the way for his honourable recall to his native city and Church; but a more solemn summons called him to a still higher dignity. The Decian persecution came and consigned him to a dungeon, where he again barely missed the crown he had so ardently coveted forty-five years before. Loaded with chains, racked with cruel tortures, and doomed to the stake, he was released at the death of the emperor, only to die of the sufferings he had endured—a true confessor, if not a martyr—at Tyre, in the year 253 or 254, and in the sixty-ninth year of his age.

“It is impossible,” says a recent able writer, “to deny a respectful sympathy to this extraordinary man, who, with all his brilliant talents and hosts of enthusiastic friends and admirers, was driven from his country, stripped of his sacred office, excommunicated from a part of the Church, then thrown into a dungeon, loaded with chains, racked by torture, doomed to drag his aged and dislocated limbs in pain and poverty, and long after his death to have his memory branded, his name anathematized, and his salvation denied; but who, nevertheless, did more than all his enemies combined to advance the cause of sacred learning, to refute and convert heathens and heretics, and to make the Church respected in the eyes of the world.”

¹ Long before this (in 218) he had been invited to Antioch by Julia Mammæa, the mother of Alexander Severus, that she might learn from him the Christian doctrine. An Arabian prince honoured him with a visit for the same purpose.

The prolific activity of Origen's pen, or rather of the many pens which his thick coming thoughts kept in motion, was something almost incredible. "He wrote more books," says the sarcastic Jerome, "than other men could read." "His works," says another father, reckoning no doubt in the number all his separate tracts, homilies, and fugitive writings, "were six thousand." Of his letters, Eusebius collected eight hundred out of the waste of quick oblivion, which usually attends such productions. The variety, too, of his productions was as remarkable as their abundance. The greatest scholar, and generally, perhaps, the most cultured man of his age, he was equally at home in philology, in philosophy, and in theology, in apologetics, in exegetics, and in dogmatics, and scattered the rich treasures of his fresh and brilliant genius over the whole wide field of human thought. There was nothing almost that he did not touch; nothing that he touched which he did not also adorn. But the central point of all his studies and literary toils was still the sacred word, which he loved with his whole heart, and in which he might be said almost literally to meditate, with wistful prayerful scrutiny, day and night.

His most valuable labours, accordingly, were in the field of sacred criticism and exegesis. Besides his celebrated "Hexapla," or polyglot version of the Old Testament Scriptures, with another smaller work of the same kind, the result together of eight-and-twenty years' unwearied labour, he wrote commentaries on all the books of the Old and New Testaments in three several forms. There were brief notes,¹ or scholia on difficult passages for beginners; more extended expositions of whole books for more advanced study;² and practical and hortatory discourses for general edification.³ Of these the first are entirely lost; of the second, a large part still survive in the original Greek; of the last we have only fragments

¹ Σημειώσεις, scholia.

² Τόμοι, commentarii.

³ Ὁμιλίαι.

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in the free translations of Jerome and Rufinus. As a whole, they are replete with all the finest fruits of their author's genius, and though more or less vitiated throughout by an excessive tendency to ideal allegorizing characteristic of his school and his age,¹ gave a powerful impulse to the intelligent and scientific study of the sacred oracles which was felt for ages after him. He continued the great master of Scripture criticism and exegesis, till his fame was in some degree dimmed by that of Chrysostom, who, if inferior in profound creative genius, excelled him in that combination and fine balance of faculties which makes the sound and sober and reliable expositor. Henceforth the great light of Antioch, with his sober tact, clear judgment, rigid analysis of the grammatical and historical sense, and apposite applications to daily life, was recognised by the universal Church, if not as the most fascinating, yet as the surest and safest guide.

Origen's invaluable services in the field of Christian apologetics have been already alluded to. His great work against Celsus, in eight books, written in the latter years of his life, happily in large measure still survives in the Greek original, and constitutes perhaps the most valuable literary legacy of his genius and his age. His chief doctrinal work ("De Principiis"),² on the first principles of the Christian faith, is less valuable, and was comparatively a juvenile production. A treatise on prayer, with an exposition of the Lord's Prayer, and an exhortation to martyrdom, appropriately crown the literary labours of one who was in heart a martyr, even from a child, and whose whole life was, according to his own grand words, "one great continuous prayer."

¹ Origen recognises a threefold sense of Scripture, corresponding to the threefold nature of man, as body (*σῶμα*), soul (*ψυχή*), and spirit (*πνεῦμα*); *first*, the grammatical sense (*σωματικός*); *second*, the moral (*ψυχικός*); *third*, the spiritual or mystical (*πνευματικός*). It will be seen how exactly this accords also with the threefold division of mankind according to the Gnostic system. See above.

² Περὶ ἀρχῶν.

Of the peculiar theology which proceeded from the school of Alexandria, and of which Clement and Origen were the most distinguished exponents, the limits of this history will not permit us to speak at length. Its grand aim was the reconciliation of faith and reason, of Christian truth with all other truth, however discovered and made known. Thus they sought, not so much simply to confute the false science of heathen philosophers and heretical teachers, as to supplant it by the substitution of the true. Even in those human and erring systems themselves they recognised certain germs and dim foreshadowings of that one eternal truth which was to be found in its completeness only in Christ. Not the law and the prophets only, but even the dim dreams of heathen sages, had a shadow of good things to come. The same Eternal Word that spake to the fathers by the prophets, had spoken, though in language darker and less articulate, also to them; perhaps, also, some faint rays of a primitive revelation, or from the Jewish Scriptures, had reached them in their home of darkness. Thus they could see in Plato also, as well as in Moses, a school-master to bring men to Christ. Heathen philosophy was the wild olive tree which was to be ennobled and rendered fruitful by faith, or, as Origen expresses it, like the jewels which the Israelites carried away from Egypt, and which might serve alike to adorn the temple of God or to furnish the materials for a golden calf. Christ was the desire of all nations, whose inward yearnings, more or less articulate, after a divine deliverer and king had been stirred and cherished from first to last by the same divine author of eternal wisdom and truth.¹

In the same way the wild speculations of the Gnostics they regarded not as simple error, but as the manifestation of a true though erring instinct after deeper truth.

¹ See Appendix—*Doctrine of the Logos.*

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It was, therefore, not to be stifled, but satisfied by a true Christian and scriptural philosophy.

This master idea furnishes the key at once to the strength and the weakness of the Alexandrian theology; its catholic liberality and breadth on the one hand, and its tendency to a vague idealism on the other. If it profited much by the heathen wisdom, it also often conceded too much to it; and if the gospel in its hands aimed at being a philosophical Christianity, it was often in danger of degenerating into a Christianized philosophy.

The divi-
nity of
Christ.

The great dogmatic question of Origen's time was that which concerned the person and proper divinity of the Son of God. On this subject the chief form of heretical teaching was that of monarchianism, or the doctrine of the absolute unity of God, not in essence merely, but in personal subsistence. There was but one God, and one person of the godhead, and if the names Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were applicable to him, they were only names, or, at best, the expressions of different forms of manifestation. In regard to Christ there were two different shades of opinion. Some regarded him as divine only in so far as a divine power dwelt and worked in him, and have been hence called *dynamistic monarchians*; the other, that the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him, and found in him a peculiar form of manifestation, and are hence called *modalistic monarchians*. To the former class belonged the various systems of the Alogi, the Theodotians, of Artemon, and Paul of Samosata; to the latter those of Praxeas, Noetus, Beryllus, and Sabellius.

The latter view, as coming nearer in expression to the catholic and orthodox doctrine, was perhaps of the two the more insidious and dangerous. It was brought to its utmost completeness in the ingenious and elaborate theory of the last named writer, who taught a full Trinity of divine manifestations, in place of the catholic Trinity of divine persons. The same divine, eternal per-

sonality had come forth successively into manifestation as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, sustaining for a season each of those several names or parts in the great evolutions of creation and redemption, and then returning again into the simplicity of his own absolute and indivisible essence. His Trinity, therefore, was successive, not coexistent—temporal, not necessary or eternal. It is open, like all other forms of modalistic monarchianism, to one startling inference, which procured for the whole system a peculiarly expressive name. The personal oneness of the eternal Father with Him who as the Son lived and died in Jesus of Nazareth, seemed to draw along with it the inevitable consequence that the Father himself had suffered on the cross, and, accordingly, the maintainers of the doctrine were stigmatized as *Patripassians*. In broad and ever more clear demarcation from all those erroneous theories, stood the orthodox and catholic doctrine of the proper divinity of Christ on the one hand, and of his distinct personality on the other. Of that great and fundamental article Origen was a powerful and successful defender, and contributed not a little, especially by his clear enunciation of the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son, to lay the foundation for the full and systematic development of the great Trinitarian mystery a hundred years after.¹

IV. We have now to make a transition from the East to the West—from the region of Greek to the region of Latin theology. It is somewhat remarkable that that theology did not originate in Latium. As the Greek Christian literature took its rise, not in Greece, but in Egypt, so that of Rome had its cradle and first home, not in Rome, but in Carthage. The causes of this have been well pointed out by a recent eloquent historian. “For some considerable part,” says Dean Mil-

TERTUL-
LIAN

¹ See Appendix—*Doctrine of the Trinity before the Council of Nicæa.*

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man, " of the three first centuries, the Church of Rome, and most, if not all the Churches of the West, were, if we may so speak, Greek religious colonies. Their language was Greek, their writers Greek, their Scriptures Greek, and many vestiges and traditions show that their ritual, their liturgy was Greek. Through Greek the communication of the Churches of Rome and of the West was constantly kept up with the East; and through Greek every heresiarch, or his disciples, having found his way to Rome, propagated, with more or less success, his peculiar doctrines. Greek was the commercial language throughout the empire, by which the Jews—before the destruction of their city, already so widely disseminated through the world, and altogether engaged in commerce—carried on their affairs. The Greek Old Testament was read in the synagogues of the foreign Jews. The Churches, formed sometimes on the foundation, to a certain extent on the model, of the synagogues, would adhere for some time, no doubt, to their language. The Gospels and the apostolic writings, so soon as they became part of the public worship, would be read as the Septuagint was, in their original tongue. All the Christian extant writings which appeared in Rome and in the West are Greek, or were originally Greek—the Epistle of Clement, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Clementine Recognitions and Homilies, the works of Justin Martyr, down to Caius and Hippolytus, the author of the Refutation of all Heresies: the Octavius of Minucius Felix, and the Treatise of Novatian on the Trinity, are the earliest known works of Latin Christian literature which came from Rome. So was it too in Gaul; there the first Christians were settled chiefly in the Greek cities, which owned Marseilles as their parent, and which retained the use of Greek as their vernacular tongue. Irenæus wrote in Greek; the account of the Martyrs of Lyons and Vienne is in Greek. Vestiges of the old Greek ritual

long survived, not only in Rome, but in some of the Gallic Churches. The Kyrie Eleison still lingers in the Latin service." On the southern shore of the Mediterranean the same causes were not at work. There the Latin tongue, spoken by the ruling and educated classes, divided the ground with the old Punic speech. The language of the Church, therefore, and of public worship was Latin. Her bishops preached, her councils deliberated and resolved, in Latin. The version of the Sacred Scriptures which was read in her assemblies, and from which the people first heard the word of life, was Latin.¹ Her first great teacher, the brightest light of the age, not for Carthage or Africa only, but for the whole Western Church, wrote—and wrote as no Christian writer had ever done before—in Latin.

That teacher was QUINTUS SEPTIMUS FLORENS TERTULLIANUS. He was a contemporary, but probably a few years the senior, of Origen. In most respects those two distinguished men were the direct counterparts of each other. They were in an emphatic sense representative men,—the chief exponents and spokesmen respectively of two great schools or tendencies of Christian thought, which then indeed for the first time came out into open manifestation, but which have co-existed in greater or less activity in every age of the Church. The one in those days had its centre at Alexandria, the other at Carthage. Situated on the same margin of the same Mediterranean basin, and under the same torrid African sky, those two leading provincial cities were yet, in the whole style of their intellectual culture and religious tendency, the direct opposites of each

Alexan-
dria and
Carthage

¹ "There is strong ground for supposing that . . . the earliest of those many Latin versions noticed by Augustine, and on which Jerome grounded his Vulgate, were African." Milman, who refers to Lachman and other learned writers in support of this opinion. "The dubious passage of St. Augustine, on which alone rests the tradition of the versio *Itala*, I would read, after Bentley, as Bishop Marsh and most of the later Biblical scholars, *illa*."—*Ibid. Latin Christianity*, vol. i. p. 30.

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other. The one represented the spirit of the East, the other of the West. The one was Greece etherealized; the other was Rome intensified and exaggerated. The one was refined, intellectual, speculative; the other rough, energetic, practical. The one dwelt in the region of the ideal; the other of the real. The one was of the schools; the other of the forum. The one dealt in theories; the other in facts and in deeds. Such was the general atmosphere and element of the two places respectively, and the peculiar view which their two greatest teachers took of the Christian revelation corresponded to it. With the one it was a divine philosophy, the centre of all other philosophies, and the master key to all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; with the other a divine dogma. To the one it was the essence of all truth; to the other the one absolute and exclusive truth. To the one it was a profound doctrine to be pondered, comprehended, traced in all its manifold connections and relations; to the other, a simple message, to be believed, embraced, obeyed, carried to the ends of the earth, lived for, died for, as the one divine panacea for the sins and the woes of man.

Such respectively were Origen and Tertullian. The one was the Christian philosopher, the other the Christian advocate.

Of the illustrious Carthaginian himself, we know in one sense almost nothing, in another almost everything; nothing of the life, everything of the man. Of his outward history scarcely a trace has been preserved either by his own pen or any other; but his whole spirit lives in his writings, and his very countenance almost seems to look down upon us from the canvas, on which, in strong, vivid, burning lines, he has drawn himself. The following circumstances are recorded or inferred with more or less of certainty. He was born at Carthage, somewhere about the year A.D. 160, and was the son of a heathen Roman centurion, from whom he inherited a respectable social position and

good prospects of earthly prosperity and advancement. Destined for the Roman bar, he enjoyed the advantage of a solid and extensive literary education, in which, as his whole writings show, he made great proficiency. Besides his own vernacular speech, which he could wield as no other man of his time could do, he could discourse fluently in the Greek tongue, the chosen language in those days of literature and philosophy.

He had already entered on the legal profession, and probably won some eminence in it, when his conversion to the Christian faith turned the whole current of his life into a new channel. Of the circumstances of that great change we know nothing. All that is certain is that in ripe manhood, and in the full career of a life of worldly pleasure and sin, his strong and ardent soul was arrested in its course, and made obedient to the faith which once it hated and despised. That there must, in the case of such a man, have been a crisis, and, probably, a very marked one between the old life and the new, and that conversion must have been for him in a very signal sense a second birth, we must have inferred with certainty, even had he himself not told us, speaking doubtless from his own experience, that Christians are not "born but made." Once a Christian, he was wholly a Christian. The whole stream of his strong and impetuous nature was turned into this channel, and flowed henceforth in it alone. From that moment to his life's end he cared for nothing else, lived for nothing else, but to advance and defend the faith of Christ. With imperfect views of that faith in many points, and even with some serious errors, doctrinal and practical, yet such as he knew and understood it, he loved it with his whole heart, and fought for it with his whole strength. When we have said this, we have told nearly all we know of his after history. It is probable that he visited Rome, but there is no evidence that he ever lived or laboured there. It is generally sup-

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posed that he was a presbyter, but there are no traces of this in his writings, and his sphere was evidently rather that of literary than of official action. In later life he joined the sect of the Montanists, which was just then coming into prominence as an important phase of the religious life of the age, but at what precise time, and in connection with what circumstances, is unknown.¹ He died at Carthage about the year A.D. 220,² leaving his name to a peculiar religious community, which retained a separate existence down to the time of Augustine, and his spirit and influence to the Church of God throughout all the world, and throughout all time.

Such are the few and faint footprints of mere outward history, which one who trod with so strong and firm a step the world's stage in his day has left behind him; but if we have no "satisfactory biography of what he did, and what he suffered, and where he journeyed, and with whom he associated, we have ample means of a real acquaintance with him in his writings. The distinction between words and works is a useful practical one; but words *are* works. In the book a man writes, he lives and acts before me, and there is nothing enables me to know him better."³ Of no man is this more true than of Tertullian, of whom it may be truly said, that into every line he writes he not only distils the fruits of his thought and learning, but precipitates his very living self.

His writings are at once extensive and varied, touching on almost every theological question of the day, speculative, doctrinal, and practical. Alike in apologetics, in dogmatics, and in Christian ethics he holds an important place. No fewer than thirty distinct treatises from his pen, yet survive, from amongst many others doubtless that have perished; and "if printed and bound in our modern style would have made seven or eight solid

¹ Probably about 202.

² The Tertullianists.

³ See an excellent monograph on Tertullian, by the Rev. James Walker, in the "Free Church Essays." Edinburgh: Constable, 1858.

octavos." As a whole they are characterized by great excellences and great defects, both alike naturally proceeding from the same source. His impetuous, ardent, and withal gloomy temperament, imparted at once a fiery energy, and a certain cast of severity and extremeness to his thoughts. His words are keen, trenchant, vivid, full of living force and fire, but harsh and sometimes extravagant withal. He is brilliant, glowing, fertile, suggestive; but lacks consistency and repose. His style is characteristically forensic. Again and again are we reminded of the Roman advocate in the fierce declamation, and the rhetorical dash and skill with which he assails his adversaries and states his cause. He pleads for Christianity in the great forum of the world as for a client whose cause he knows is good, and which he is resolved, and makes no doubt of being able, to carry triumphant through. He has an air at once exultant and defiant as he throws down the gauge of battle, and challenges him who dares to take it up. "Crucify us, torture us, condemn us, wear us out," he cries, "the oftener you mow us down, the more numerous we grow. The Christian's blood is the Christian's seed."

An attempt has been made to divide his writings into two classes, according as they belong to the period before or the period after his accession to the Montanistic sect; but the general tone and spirit of the whole is so similar, that it is impossible to draw the line with any precision or certainty. Tertullian the Churchman, and Tertullian the Montanist, are in most respects so much alike that you can scarcely ever tell for certain whether the one or the other is speaking. In truth, his adhesion to that sect was evidently not so much the result of any great change in his religious convictions, as of an original sympathy between his own views and theirs. When Montanism rose into prominence and wide-spread influence, he found himself already a Montanist. So far as any important

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modifying influence is concerned, it is probable that he moulded the system far more than the system moulded him; and if any marked change is discernible in his writings, it is only that which lies in the gradually deepening lines of that stern, gloomy, ascetic, and enthusiastic piety which was characteristic of him from the first.

Montan-
ism.

It was probably about the time Tertullian was born, during the sad, feverish days of Marcus Aurelius, and amid those Phrygian mountains where the tendency to religious excitement had long been indigenous, that Montanus, a young and ardent convert from Paganism, began to preach an enthusiastic doctrine not unlike that of some of the more impulsive sects of modern times. Our information in regard to it is very scanty; but a few pregnant facts have been preserved, which may enable us to form a conception at least of the general character and tendency of the movement. It was, apparently, a kind of religious revival, marred by certain morbid elements, and pushed to an extravagant extreme. Like all such revivals, it took its special cast and character from the age and the circumstances in which it had its birth. A resurrection of the religious life of the age, it imparted fresh vitality to all that belonged to that age—to that which was sound and to that which was unsound—to that which was true and good and to that which was morbid alike. It was orthodox in faith, enthusiastic in feeling, rigoristic in discipline, and ascetic in life. Originating, in great measure, in violent reaction from the listless formalism which was then fast creeping over the Church, its great theme was an exaggerated doctrine of the Spirit's influences and gifts. It proclaimed a new dispensation of the divine Paraclete, whom the Lord had indeed announced, but who had never till then fully come. Holy men and women, raised up immediately by God, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and received special communications in ecstatic dream and vision direct from

Heaven. "Behold," said Montanus, in one of his oracles in the name of the Paraclete, "the man is as a lyre, and I sweep over him as a plectrum; the man sleeps; I wake. Behold, it is the Lord who puts the heart of men out of themselves, and who gives another heart to men." A new era had dawned on the world. The Church, while still building on the old foundation of the apostles and prophets, and adhering rigidly to the traditional faith once delivered to the saints, was about to advance to a loftier stage of spiritual insight and practical perfection than she had yet seen. The age of Christ himself was to be outshone by the age of the Spirit. The Church, which in the primeval, the Mosaic, and the apostolic times respectively, had passed in succession through the periods of her infancy, her childhood, and her early youth, was now to attain the full maturity and stature of her perfect age.¹ In this plenitude of supernatural and transcendent gifts, the ordinary appliances of human culture and ecclesiastical order were cast into the shade. Means and ordinances were nothing; life was everything. Knowledge, learning, ecclesiastical forms and laws, no more than circumcision or uncircumcision, availed anything, but a new creature. All old things were about to pass away, and all things to become new. There was to be a new Church, a new ministry, a new discipline and law of life. The outward visible society which was now called the Church was but a carnal and semi-worldly mass, in presence of that living and spiritual fellowship which was now gathering around the new prophets; and the most learned and eloquent tongues that had heretofore edified the Church were as nothing beside the stirring voices of those lay evangelists, male and female, who were the

¹ Sic et justitia primo fuit, in rudimentis, natura Deum metuens; dehinc per legem et prophetas promovit in infantiam; dehinc per evangelium efferebit in juventutem; nunc per Paracletum componitur in maturitatem.—*De Virginitus Velandis*, § i. It is worthy of notice how the root-idea here has again and again re-appeared in connection with different theories of development—most recently in Dr. Temple's Essay on the Education of the World.

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direct organs of the divine Spirit. The movement was particularly strong among the ignorant and excitable multitude, and among the more impressible and susceptible sex, from whose ranks were drawn forth some of the most noted and successful of its apostles. The two prophetesses, Priscilla and Maximilla, were especially prominent, and rivalled in notoriety and influence even the founder Montanus himself. Their views of the Christian life were gloomy and severe in the extreme. Prescribing for all Christians a monastic rigour which the Catholic Church in its sternest mood confined to the clergy and professed ascetics alone, they heaped up mortifications and fastings, and multiplied days of special penance and prayer. Warned by their prophets of the immediate advent of the Lord amid judgment and terror, they lived in perpetual expectation of the end of all—spurned all earthly delights and pleasures, braced themselves for their last great battle, panted for martyrdom, and denounced the prudent avoidance of danger in persecuting times as implicit apostasy. Sharing in the ascetic and morbid views of the domestic relations then prevalent in the Church, and carrying them to a violent extreme, they denounced second marriages as adultery, and disparaged all marriage as an inferior and semi-carnal state of life. A marked severity of dress and demeanour was enjoined. Virgins must be veiled, and even all chaste and matronly adornments eschewed. The bride of Christ must always be arrayed in a manner befitting her heavenly espousals—the Christian soldier girded with his appropriate weapons of self-denial and humility. With so austere an ideal of the Christian life, their views of discipline were naturally in proportion austere. To the lapsed and the erring, whom the Catholic communities, perhaps, welcomed back with an over easy indulgence, they took up an attitude of terrific severity. Apostasy, or even grievous sin of any kind after baptism, was an inex-

piable offence. For such, on earth at least, there was no ordinary possibility of forgiveness. Their perpetrators, once shut out from the bosom of the Church, must remain shut out to the last. However a God of infinite mercy may deal with them in the end, the Church, at least, has no ministry or message of forgiveness to them now. They might find absolution and peace by a bloody baptism or by strong crying and tears in their dying hour, but scarcely before or by any other means. In short, it was a revival of religious faith and earnestness, in a period when ascetic rigour was generally regarded as the highest type of evangelical sanctity; and accordingly, while vivifying every other element of the Christian life of the age, roused this also into tremendous potency and activity.

With such a system as this, it need not be said that such a spirit as Tertullian's must have felt an instinctive sympathy. Alike in its excellences and in its defects, in that in it which was morbid and in that which was sound and true, it must have been altogether to his mind, and have awakened a powerful response in his strong, passionate, gloomy, and enthusiastic nature. Its very extravagances and tendency to wild extremes must have had a fascination for one whose very nature it was to throw himself impetuously into whatever he embraced, to live wholly in it and for it, and to disdain all modifying principles and considerations. He would be a Christian, not merely wholly, but only, and determined in a wider sense than even Paul, to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. For nothing that was not distinctively Christian, however innocent in itself, had he any tolerance. All within that sacred pale was of God, all beyond it of the devil. Even those very gifts of learning and culture with which he was himself so richly furnished, he despised, and scorned them at the very time he wielded them in behalf of the truth. So he threw himself wholly into the Montanistic system,

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which seemed to him not so much a new doctrine pleading for his assent, as only the embodiment of his own deepest principles and spirit. From the moment of his adhesion, he became the leading spirit and chief moulding power of the movement. From his genius, originality, and intellectual power, it derived a consistency and a strength which had not before belonged to it, and passed from the condition of an enthusiastic popular movement to that of a strong and influential Christian sect. As a community, it had long since burst beyond the barriers of Catholic conformity and communion. It had been condemned by ecclesiastical synods, and denounced by bishops and doctors. Such new wine, fierce and effervescent, could not long be confined to the old bottles of customary law and order. Even the Roman Church, whose practical tact and genius knew so well how to assimilate whatever might be used and directed towards her own ruling ends, had first temporized, and then set herself in an attitude of direct antagonism. It was thus as a proscribed and isolated sect that Tertullian approached this body, and cast in his lot with it. But though he lived henceforth and died beyond the pale of Catholic communion, he still remained the greatest light and foremost teacher of Western Christendom, and did more, within that sphere, by his spirit and writings, to mould the whole character of Christian thought and life, in that and after times, than any other man of his age. Like his illustrious Alexandrian contemporary, he has no place in the roll of Rome's canonized saints and authenticated doctors; but he belongs unmistakably to the noble fellowship of those select spirits who are the property of all time, and whose true monument is the Christian civilization and the highest and holiest life of the world.¹

¹ His extant works are the following:—

1. Apologetic—The Apologeticus; Ad Nationes; Ad Scapulam; De Testimonio Animæ.

2. Polemic—De Præscriptione Hereticorum; De Carne Christi; De Resurrectione

V. The true heir and successor of Tertullian, as well as the connecting link between him and the Catholic Church of after times, was THIASCIUS CÆCILIVS CYPRIANUS, Bishop of Carthage, and born in that city about the year A.D. 200. In him the spirit of the Montanistic reformer was at once continued, and controlled by other modifying elements. The stern ascetic Puritanism, which, in the separatist Presbyter, ran wild and uncontrolled, was, in the Catholic bishop, tamed down and accustomed to the regulative rein of ecclesiastical discipline and law. What was before revolutionary became now conservative; what before threatened to rend the whole framework of the Church asunder, now entered into its life and infused fresh energy into all its institutions and all its agencies. The same change, in short, happened then, which has happened again and again since in the history of the Church, by which a movement, at first mainly doctrinal and personal, has become afterwards ecclesiastical. The revival of religion precedes and leads the way to the revival of the Church.

In some respects there is a remarkable coincidence between the histories of those two eminent men. Both were born in the same city, of heathen parentage, and in a high social position; both were of distinguished talents and enjoyed the benefit of the best literary culture of the age; both had addicted themselves to the study of that rhetorical art, which in those days was the chief passport to public employment and distinction; both were in middle life, and in the very heyday of worldly pleasure and sin, when divine grace arrested them and conquered them to the Cross; both probably passed by a sudden and very marked

Carnis, Contra Gnosticos scorpice; De Animâ; Adversus Marcionem; Adversus Valentinianos; Adversus Hermogenem; Adversus Judæos; Adversus Praxeam.

3. Practical—De Corona Militis; De Spectaculis; De Idololatria; De Fugâ in Persecutione; Ad Uxorem; De Exhortatione Castitatis; De Monogamiâ; De Pudicitâ; De Cultu Fæminarum; De Vestitu; De Virginibus Velandis; De Jeuniis; De Baptismo; De Pœnitentiâ; De Oratione; De Patientia; Ad Martyres; De Pallio.

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transition from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light; both, in fine, in embracing Christianity, embraced it with their whole heart, and counted all things but loss, for the excellency of that knowledge for which alone, henceforth, they lived, and for which they were ready to die. In other points they stand out from one another in marked contrast. In Tertullian's character the African element preponderated, in Cyprian's, the Roman. The one excelled in fervour, the other in energy. The one was the man of thought, the other of action. The element of the one was life, of the other law. The one originated, the other organized. The one was the great divine, the other was the great ecclesiastic.

The relation in which the later father stood to the earlier, and the affectionate reverence in which, spite of his separatist aberrations, he ever regarded him, is vividly embodied in a circumstance which tradition has preserved to us. "Give me the master," he would often say to his secretary, as he sat alone in his closet, eagerly drinking in that new and wondrous knowledge which had but recently opened to him. His attendant knowing his meaning well, handed to him the well-thumbed parchment, inscribed with the burning words of the great Montanistic teacher. Thus, here as ever, the man of action did homage to the man of thought. But though he owned Tertullian as his master, and in the main adopted his views, he did so not servilely. He followed his thoughts, not so much merely to reproduce them, as to carry them out into life, and assimilate them with the existing ecclesiastical system, and practical Church life of the age.

His con-
version.

Of the history of his conversion, which took place about A.D. 246, we possess but little authentic information. The chief recorded circumstance is that he owed his spiritual life instrumentally to the instructions and the prayers of a pious Presbyter, called Cæcilius, whose name accor-

dingly, in gratitude for so great a boon, he henceforth CHAPTER
 conjoined with his own. That change itself, however, IV.
 was one never to be forgotten, and seemed to himself as
 nothing less than life from the dead. To use his own
 words, in vividly recalling the circumstances of that ever
 memorable hour, in a letter to a friend, "When I lay in
 darkness and blind night, and when tossed on the troubled
 sea of the world, I was carried hither and thither in
 uncertain and wandering tracks, ignorant of my true life,
 a stranger to truth and light, it seemed to me, with my
 then character and habits a thing next to impossible,
 which divine mercy had promised, that a man should be
 born again, and that, quickened into a new life by the
 bath of the saving waters, he should cast off all he had
 been before, and, the framework of the body remaining
 unchanged, should become in mind and soul another man.
 How is it possible, said I, that such a change can be?
 —that suddenly, and all at once, he should be divested of
 that which was either innate in his very constitution, or
 had become from habit a second nature? When do you
 ever see a man learn carefulness, who has become used to
 splendid feasts and sumptuous banquets? How can he
 who has been wont to blaze in purple and gold, conspicu-
 ous for his costly attire, be brought to humble him-
 self to a mean and plebeian dress? One man has found
 his delight in public offices and honours, and can never
 submit to the obscurity of a private station. Another,
 used to go about surrounded by a crowd of obsequious
 courtiers and flatterers, counts it a penal doom to be
 alone. It must needs be that with their strong entice-
 ments, now as ever, intemperance should allure, pride
 inflate, passion inflame, rapacity excite, cruelty goad on,
 ambition delight, lust hurl to ruin.

"Thus I often said to myself. For as I was entangled
 in the manifold errors of my former life, and did not
 believe that I could be freed from them, so I complied

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with the vices that cleaved to me, and despairing of better things, cherished my evil inclinations, as if they belonged to my nature. But after, by means of the regenerating water, the pollution of my former life had been washed away, and the pure and serene light of heaven had streamed into my pardoned heart; when, drinking in the spirit from above, I was by a second birth transformed into a new man, then instantly in a wonderful manner, doubtful things became certain, mysteries were made plain, dark things clear, power was given to do what before seemed difficult, to bear what before seemed intolerable, so that I could now perceive that my former life, which, being of carnal origin, had been spent in sin, was a thing of the earth, the life which now the Holy Ghost had inspired, a life from God."

Once a Christian he became very quickly the foremost of the Christians. Everything conspired to raise him almost immediately to a position of pre-eminence in the community of which he now became a member. His patrician birth, his ample fortune, his brilliant parts and rhetorical fame, his talent for affairs, above all the earnest zeal of his first love, and the generous devotion with which, in harmony with the ascetic spirit of that age, he relinquished all his earthly goods for behoof of the poor, all united to place him in the forefront of the Carthaginian congregation. Within a year of his baptism he was ordained a presbyter of the Church. In little more than another he was raised by popular acclamation, though not without some envious murmurs on the part of older presbyters, to the episcopal chair, which had then fallen vacant. He at first declined, no doubt sincerely, the offered dignity, but yielded at last to the urgency of the people who surrounded his house and barred all escape. But if he shrunk back at first from the proffered honour, it was assuredly from no dislike to the office itself. It was in truth the very sense he had of the awful sacredness and

responsibility of the episcopal dignity, that both made him at first recoil from it, and afterwards so greatly magnify it. He was, in truth, in the whole bent of his nature, and in all his highest gifts and endowments, every inch a bishop. He was a man born to command. It was as natural for him to lead, as it was for others to follow him. Never was he so much himself as when he raised himself to the full height of his office, and spoke in the tones of imperial authority which belonged to it. If he shrunk from the sacred name of bishop, he had no mind at least to assume the name without the thing. So he ruled the Church of God with clear mind, with earnest, steadfast purpose, and with firm hand. The churches of his province, relaxed in discipline during the long and deceitful peace of the last forty years, were made to feel that there was at last a "king in Israel." Crying abuses were crushed, daring transgressors were put to shame. Determined not to bear the spiritual sword in vain, he was a terror to evil-doers and a praise to them who did well. Pastors who, in the eager chase for worldly gain, had left their flocks; consecrated virgins who, forgetful of their high profession, paraded the streets in flaunting attire and courted, unveiled, lascivious glances at the theatre or the baths; recreant disciples, who, at the first brunt of danger, had renounced their faith, and even rushed headlong to the heathen temples to sacrifice, and then, when the storm was past, expected by an easy penance again to re-enter the ranks of the sacred brotherhood; even confessors, who, intoxicated with the honours lavished on them, were puffed up with carnal pride, and candidates for the martyr's crown, who ostentatiously courted death instead of calmly and prayerfully waiting God's time,—all alike, with sinners of a more ordinary kind, felt the lash of his stern though loving discipline.¹ Measures like these could

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Chosen
bishop.

¹ See, for proofs and illustrations in detail, and for a vivid picture of the age, the treatise *De lapsis*—passim.

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Schism of
Novatus.

not fail to make a stir at Carthage, and awaken against the new bishop some open hostility and much more secret discontent. He was one of those men of decisive character and mould whose lot it is to be at once fervently loved and cordially hated by those of his own times. The great body of the lax and compromising, especially amongst the luxurious upper classes, were soon in arms against him, and found their natural leaders in some of those presbyters who had originally opposed his election, and had never since forgiven his success. Among these stood prominent the presbyter Novatus, a man of restless and energetic spirit, who presided over a congregation in one of the suburbs. Openly braving the authority of the bishop, he had, on his own responsibility and by his own hands, ordained to the office of deacon a person of the name of Felicissimus, a man probably of wealth and influence, who accordingly occupies a prominent place in the controversies and troubles which followed. Hitherto, doubtless, the hearts of the great body of the people were still with the man whom they had so enthusiastically called to rule over them, and who was so manifestly actuated even in his sternest acts by a sincere regard for their good, but circumstances soon transpired which threatened to turn the tide of popular feeling against him. The terrible Decian persecution burst upon the Church. The heathen populace were in a frenzy of fanatic fury, and cried aloud for Christian blood. The energetic bishop was the especial object of animosity, and fierce voices shouted, "Cyprian, Cyprian, to the lions!" in the forum and in the streets. Though fearless himself of death, yet, apprehensive lest his presence at such a time should only the more inflame the fury of the persecutors and increase the sufferings of his people, and knowing at the same time that the great aim of the enemy was to strike down the heads of the Church, and thus break up and scatter the flock, he felt constrained, though reluctantly,

to bend for the present to the storm. Applying to his case the words of our Lord in Matt. x. 23, and following too, as he deemed, the direct leadings of the Holy Ghost, he retired for a season to a place of concealment. At such a time it was perhaps a braver thing thus to withdraw amid the ominous silence of friends and the cutting sneers of enemies, than to rush amid an ovation of popular applause to a bloody martyrdom. But the act was at least capable of misconstruction, and his enemies at once saw and seized their advantage. The cry of cowardice and hireling desertion was instantly raised against him. He who had been so bold in days of peace had fled panic-stricken at the first alarm of danger. The stern disciplinarian who dealt so hardly with the weaknesses of others who in a moment of extreme torture or terror had given way, had not himself the courage to face the dread ordeal in which their faith had failed. It was easy for him, in his safe retreat in the far distance, to lay down rigid rules of discipline and penance for those who in the sore combat with the enemy might sustain a fall, or for a moment yield their ground. Another power, too, in those days of a very formidable kind, was enlisted on the side of the malcontents. It had been the custom for those faithful confessors who had bravely borne the brunt of battle to intercede with the Church for those who, in a moment of weakness or under severe torture, had given way, and either implicitly or openly denied the faith. There was something graceful and touching in such intercession of the strong in behalf of the weak, and the Church had been ever ready to yield to it the utmost deference consistent with the interests of truth and holiness. Cyprian himself was most willing to do so, and, indeed, exalts the honours and prerogatives of those brave athletes of the Church to a degree which in our day would be deemed extravagant. But presuming on those privileges, and seduced doubtless by the fulsome flatteries

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of designing men, some of the confessors now in the prison at Carthage had been tempted to arrogate to themselves an authority till now unheard of, to restore by their simple fiat to communion such of their fallen brethren as they might think fit, and thus overbear or supersede the whole ordinary discipline and government of the Church. We read in particular of one Lucian, who, with almost incredible effrontery, sent to Cyprian a whole list of names recommended by him to the peace of the Church, with a request that the sentence of restoration thus passed in their behalf should be duly intimated to the other African bishops. This intolerable usurpation the exiled bishop firmly resisted, and while ready at the proper time to give to such intercessions for mercy the weight to which they were entitled, reserved all such cases for final disposal, each on its own merits, in a general council of bishops, clergy, and people on the restoration of peace. In adopting this course, he stood obviously on the firmest ground of sound principle and Christian moderation. Still his position in occupying it was a very invidious one, presenting the spectacle of a fugitive bishop contending for a more rigid discipline in the case of the fallen than even the very confessors themselves, who were at that very moment languishing in prison for the confession of the faith. It is a signal proof of Cyprian's moral courage and conscientious tenacity of purpose that he steadfastly held on his way in circumstances like these.

Meanwhile the manifold duties of his pastoral care were not neglected. Though absent in body, he was ever present in spirit amongst the flock for whose well-being and salvation alone he lived. By a constant communication by letter or deputy he maintained a vigilant surveillance over all their affairs, and everywhere the presence of his active, organizing, directive mind was felt. If he would have no one else forget his episcopal rights, he would as little himself forget his episcopal duties. So, when absent

as when present, he was still the leading mind and informing spirit of the Carthaginian Church. He exhorted the weak; he confirmed the strong; he succoured the poor and needy; he watched over the confessors in the prison, and provided alike for their temporal and spiritual wants; he ransomed the exiled in the far wilderness; he cheered on the martyrs to die,—everywhere and in all things the tender father and faithful shepherd of the flock. Thus, even in his worst times, a large portion of his old influence still remained with him, and the elements of disunion which were at work were held in check. On his return, after an absence of fourteen months, to the city, the opposition which had seemed so formidable strangely melted away. In the presence of the strong brave man the hearts of the faithful rose and rallied, and the troublers of the flock shrunk out of sight. In a full synod of the Church the case of the lapsed was deliberately considered and disposed of in a spirit of blended strictness and moderation, which commended itself to the judgment and conscience of all. The party of Novatus dwindled away, and though, in the meanwhile, they had chosen one of their number of the name of Fortunatus, as a rival bishop, in Cyprian's place, his feeble presence is scarcely seen in the full blaze of that great light which henceforth shone with undimmed lustre to the end.

But the battle of unity and schism, thus for the time closed at Carthage, was only removed to another field. At Rome, too, there had been a contested election to the episcopal chair, and the defeated party had assumed an attitude of schismatic separation. Here, too, as at Carthage, the issue turned on a question of discipline; but, curiously enough, the respective positions of the parties were exactly reversed. Here it is the more lenient party that have triumphed, and the advocates of a sterner regimen that have been defeated. Cornelius, the representative of the milder discipline, is bishop, and

Novatian-
ism.

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Novatian, the champion of ascetic rigour and stern, exclusive purism, protests and withdraws. He maintained that no one who, after baptism, had denied the faith, or by any other mortal sin forfeited the communion of the Church, could ever be received within its pale again. He might find mercy at the throne of God at the last, but could never receive any assurance or seal of that mercy at the hands of the Church on earth. Such extreme views were probably only the natural reaction from the laxity of profession and practice which had been for long growing in the Church, and took deep root and spread rapidly. Novatian was chosen rival bishop, and was soon at the head of a powerful schism, which gradually extended itself over the greater part of the Roman empire. Deputies were despatched to Carthage, to Alexandria, and to Antioch, to obtain, if possible, the recognition of the new community, and the condemnation of Cornelius. Antioch wavered. Alexandria sided with the milder party. Cyprian's own views and practice would probably have inclined him to a middle course between the two extremes; but his strong instinct of authority and Catholic unity decided him, and he cast in his lot with Cornelius, not so much as the representative of a milder discipline, as the rightful and *de facto* Bishop of Rome. He was the less disinclined, doubtless, to this course, as his old opponent Novatus¹ was here again in the field as a leading champion of the opposition side. At the first rumour of the distant fray, his restless spirit caught fire, and hastening over to the scene, he threw himself heart and soul into the strife. Constant in nothing save in his determined opposition to the ruling powers of the Church, whoever these might be, he was now as furious a zealot for a rigoristic discipline, as before for a laxer rule.

¹ The student will carefully distinguish between these two names Novatus and Novatianus, which thus so curiously meet in history.

Hitherto Cyprian's battles have been throughout those of the Church against schismatical opponents from without. Now he is about to be engaged in a conflict of another, and to him far more painful kind. It was that of one part of the Church herself against another. Before, it was the battle of unity against schism; now it is the battle of liberty against despotism. In the former case, the united episcopate of the Catholic world, and especially the two leading sees of the West, had stood side by side in defence of principles and interests which were equally dear to all; now they confront each other in deadly strife. Carthage anathematizes Rome, and Rome anathematizes Carthage. Cyprian, the prince of bishops and the champion of all bishops and episcopal rights, grapples in deadly conflict with the leading bishop of the world. Already, more than half a century before, had the metropolitan see of the West given the first signs of those pretensions to imperial precedence and supremacy, which in after times became so terrible a reality. A controversy had arisen amongst the several Churches in regard to the proper time of observing the great Christian festival of Easter, or the anniversary commemoration of the death and resurrection of Christ. Some took as their rule the days of the year on which those great events took place; others, the days of the week. Accordingly, the one party celebrated the feast of the Passion invariably on the 14th of the Jewish month Nisan, and the Resurrection on the third day thereafter, on whatever days of the week they might chance to fall; the other, on the Friday and the Sunday next succeeding. A difference of opinion gradually grew into an alienation of feeling; angry controversy took the place of amicable forbearance. The Churches of Palestine and Asia Minor took the one side, those of Rome and the West the other. As yet, however, there had been no open rupture of ecclesiastical fellowship. So late as A.D. 160, the

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Contest
with
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Victor and
the Easter
question,
A. D. 196.

saintly Polycarp and the Roman bishop Anicetus could have their friendly debate on the disputed point one day, and join together in the celebration of the same feast of love the next. But towards the close of the same century, the debate was suddenly transferred to a new arena. A question of Christian practice became a question of ecclesiastical supremacy. Victor, the then Bishop of Rome, not content with taking his side, and using his utmost legitimate influence in the controversy,¹ presumed, in the true papal tones of imperial authority, to demand from all Churches an implicit acquiescence in his own views, on pain of his high displeasure, and disruption of all ecclesiastical communion, in the event of their refusal. Milder and wiser counsels, indeed, at that time prevailed. The gentle but powerful pleadings of Irenæus subdued the spirit of the aspiring priest. But the fire smouldered only, to burst forth again in renewed fierceness on another day. During the fifty-six chequered years that followed, the successive Roman bishops had remained content with that moral precedence of dignity and danger and silent influence, which naturally belonged to the head of the first Christian community in the world, and had not so much sought the foremost place among the brethren, as striven to deserve it. But at last Victor found a successor entirely after his own heart, and on whom his mantle fitly fell. The great controversy of the day now was that of the validity of heretical baptism. Were converts to the faith of the true Church, who had previously received baptism in some heretical or schismatical communion, to be baptized again, on their reception within the Catholic pale? The Churches were divided on the question. Those of Asia and of Africa maintained the affirmative, that of Rome the negative. Cyprian was the great champion of the one side, and Stephen, Bishop of Rome, of the other. The former, on the ground

Stephen
and the
baptismal
contro-
versy,
A. D. 253-
257.

¹ For fuller details, see Appendix : *The Easter Controversy*.

that there was only one true Church of God on earth within which alone there is grace and salvation, and valid and effectual means of grace, maintained with strict consistency that baptism administered beyond the pale of that Church was in reality no baptism at all, and that therefore those who passed from such heretical communities to the Church were to be, not indeed re-baptized, but baptized as for the first time. Stephen started with essentially the same idea of the Church, but refused the inference which Cyprian drew from it. The validity of baptism, he maintained, depended, not on the person by whom it was administered, but the completeness and sufficiency of the rite itself. It was not the person doing it, but the thing done—the *opus operatum*—that constituted the essence of the matter. It was the sacrament, and not the administrator of the sacrament, that saved; and to the validity of the sacrament, all that was necessary was, that it should be performed in the right form, and in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or even of Christ alone. Persons, therefore, so baptized, by whatever hands and in whatever communion, might be received into Catholic communion, on a simple renunciation of their errors, by the imposition of hands. The controversy ran high on either side. Arguments and counter-arguments, with more or less of cogency, were multiplied. The one party stood strong on the ground of theory, the other of expediency. But Stephen, wearied of discussion, transferred the controversy to another sphere. What he could not accomplish by argument he sought to impose by force. Again there went forth from Rome to the universal Church, not a persuasive appeal, but an imperious command—not a pleading for unity, but a demand for submission. All dissentients from the Roman doctrine and practice must either renounce their error or forfeit the fellowship of the universal Church, of which Rome was the natural centre and head. Against such a

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usurpation Cyprian arose in his strength, and did battle bravely. He had pled for a united episcopate, but not for an enslaved Church. Before, he had defended the right of bishops against insubordinate presbyters and people. He was now as ready to defend bishops and people alike against a usurping Pope. He, with equal decision and earnestness, maintained Catholic unity, and repudiated papal supremacy. He had been willing, indeed, before, and he was willing still, to concede to the bishop of the foremost city of the world that primacy of moral precedence and central influence which naturally belonged to him; but further than this he would not go. He might be first, but first only in a college of co-equal brethren—the natural centre and honorary president of a body whom he might aspire to lead, but had no right to command. There was over all the chief pastors of the Church but one Master, even Christ, and all they were brethren. How the controversy would have ended, if allowed to run its course uninterrupted, we cannot tell. It was brought to a sudden termination by the solemn call addressed to both combatants alike to gird themselves for a higher and holier combat, in which they fought and conquered side by side. Stephen died a martyr in the year A.D. 257, Cyprian followed close behind. The controversy itself lingered on for more than half a century longer; but the Roman practice, as the more moderate and practically expedient, as in the case, too, of the Easter question, gradually gained ground, and was finally established as the universal law of the Church at the Council of Nicæa in 325.

Our brave bishop now approaches the close of his brief but active career. The Valerian persecution broke out (A.D. 258), and found him as ready now firmly to face the storm, as before wisely to bend before it. According to his own principle, he had abode God's time; and now that time was come. His end was calm and grand. If

there was at times a tinge of theatrical display in his words, there was not a shadow of this in his last and greatest deed. "Thanks be to God!" were his simple and solemn words, as the fatal sentence fell from the lips of the judge; and then, taking his way amid weeping crowds to the place of execution—an open field outside the city, surrounded with trees—he prepared himself to die. He laid aside his mantle, directed his deacon to give twenty-five pieces of gold to the executioner; then kneeling down, amid calm and silent prayer, laid his head beneath the fatal axe, and passed away

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It was on the 14th of August 258 that, by a death in both respects befitting him, that true Roman and true Christian fell. If the Carthaginian congregation had differed in feeling and opinion in regard to their good bishop once, they are all united now in reverent affection and tears.

A goodly church soon rose over the spot where the martyr died, in which, a century and a half after, Augustine preached, and commemorated with befitting honour the martyr's name.

The character, and still more the career of Cyprian, will be estimated differently, according to the differing views and ecclesiastical position of those who judge him. He was, alike by natural bent and rooted principle, emphatically a High Churchman—the founder, indeed, of High Churchism, and the father of all High Churchmen in every age and all the world over. His master-principle and cherished ideal was the unity of the Church—a unity, not of spiritual life alone, but of outward visible organization. The Church to him was a great spiritual empire, within the earthly, secular empire; not of the world, indeed, but in it, and in it as palpable and tangible to sense as any other existing thing on earth. It was governed by the united brotherhood of bishops, and was

Dogma
of the
Church

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co-extensive with the limits of their sway.¹ Those who were in communion with the bishop were in the Church; those who separated themselves from him were beyond its pale. There was only one Church in the world, and one Church in any part of the world. That was the bride of Christ;² the home of the saints;³ the threshing-floor of the precious wheat;⁴ the Redeemer's seamless robe, which to divide is to destroy;⁵ the tree with many branches; the sun with many rays; the fountain with many streams.⁶ Within it alone is salvation.⁷ To forsake it is to forsake life—to become an alien and a wanderer from the home and house of God. "No man can call God Father, who does not own the Church as his mother." Baptism was no baptism,⁸ martyrdom itself was no martyrdom,⁹ out of the Church. Whatever apparent virtues or excellent gifts the abettors of schism may possess, are with him of little account. He asks not who they are or what they are, but where they are; for he that is not with Christ is against Christ, and those are against Christ who are against Christ's Church.¹⁰ They are treading in the very footsteps of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram of old, and, sharing in their guilt, must, unless grace prevent, be sharers also in their doom.¹¹

It is not difficult to recognise the features of this system, or to discover its counterpart in this age or in any age. It is the theory of external, visible Catholicism, as distinguished from Romanism. It is the papal system without the Pope. That last usurpation indeed, he resisted; but it resulted inevitably as a necessary inference

Cathol-
icism and
Roman-
ism.

¹ *Episcopatus unus est, cujus a singulis in solidum pars tenetur, &c.—De Unit. Eccl., § 5.*

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.* § 8.

⁴ *Ibid.* § 6.

⁵ *Ibid.* § 7.

⁶ *Ibid.* § 5.

⁷ *Quisquis ab ecclesiâ segregatus adulteræ jungitur, a promissis ecclesiæ separatur, nec perveniet ad Christi præmia, qui relinquit ecclesiam Christi. Alienus est, profanus est, hostis est. Habere jam non potest Deum patrem qui ecclesiam non habet matrem. Si potuit evadere quisquam qui extra arcam Noë fuit, et qui extra ecclesiam foris fuerit, evadit, &c.—De Unit. Eccl. § 6, and *passim.**

⁸ *Ibid.* § 11.

⁹ *Ibid.* § 14.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, § 17.

¹¹ *Ibid.* § 18. But the student should carefully study the whole treatise.

from his principles, and followed in the due time. An external unity must have an external centre of unity; a visible empire must have a visible head. The arch may be propped up, but cannot permanently stand, without the key-stone. That key-stone is already preparing, and will soon come forth to view. The Roman Church, first in dignity, first in influence, first in central position, first often in danger and in death—the common resort and meeting-place for all Christians and Christian teachers throughout the world—the natural arbiter of controversies and healer of differences amongst the provincial communities—the episcopal see, too, as it began more and more to be whispered, of the martyred prince of the apostles himself—that Church seemed marked out by nature and all history as the destined centre of visible Christendom and mother of all the Churches. So Cyprian, while combating the Papacy, really prepared the way for it. He contended for Catholicism without the Pope; but Catholicism, such as he understood it, could not live without the Pope. In his system the popedom was not a dogma, but it was a desideratum; and that desideratum, if the system is to be permanently realized, must be supplied. So, at the same moment, though by different means, visible Catholicism was preparing for the Papacy, and the Papacy preparing for Catholicism; and it needed only the course of events to unite them together in one compact and massive structure, which has survived the storms of a thousand years, and remains unshaken to this hour.

Cyprian's grand error and that of his times was, the confounding the true, essential unity of the Church with an outward, visible uniformity, and thus applying to a mere earthly and imperfect organization the attributes which belong alone to the unseen Church of the first-born. Hence it came to pass, that while he left his noble life, and much, too, of his teaching to the Church at large, he bequeathed his most cherished theory, and the most original

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and pregnant production of his pen, as a fatal legacy to Rome.¹

With the days of Cyprian the public history of the Martyr Church may almost be said to close. Thereafter till the last decisive struggle there succeeded a period dim and obscure, in which there are few striking events or conspicuous actors to arrest our attention. Its literature, however, is not without some considerable names, though none of the commanding importance of those we have now commemorated. In the East the writings and the spirit of the great Alexandrian still continued the dominant influence. Heraclas,² at first catechist, then bishop of Alexandria; Dionysius,³ his successor in both these offices, and whose administrative tact and genius, rather than any conspicuous literary fame, acquired for him the title of "the Great;" Pierius and Theognostus, later teachers of the catechetical school, and of high repute in their day as scholars and divines; Gregory,⁴ surnamed Thaumaturgus, bishop for twenty-six years of his native city, Neo-Cæsarea in Pontus, reputed in later story a miracle-worker, but far more illustrious for that pastoral zeal and fruitfulness which enabled him to say on his deathbed, that he left to his successor no more unbelievers in his diocese than he had found Christians;⁵ Pamphilus of Cæsarea,⁶ who earned the gratitude of after ages by a careful transcript of the Septuagint from the celebrated Hexapla, and by the collection of a valuable library from which Eusebius, Jerome, and many others afterwards drew,—all these were Origen's immediate disciples and

¹ His extant works, besides others either spurious or doubtful, are—

1. Eighty-one epistles.

2. De Gratia Dei.

3. De Idolorum Vanitate.

4. Libri Tres Testimoniorum.

5. De Habitu Virginum.

6. De Unitate Ecclesiæ.

7. De Lapsis.

8. De Oratione Dominica.

9. De Mortalitate.

10. De Exhortatione Martyrii.

11. Ad Demetrianum.

12. De Opere et Eleemosynis.

13. De Bono Patientiæ.

14. De Zelo et Livore.

² Bp. 233; ob. 248.

³ Cat. 233; bp. 248; ob. 265.

⁴ Ob. 270.

⁵ Namely, seventeen. Ob. 270.

⁶ A presbyter; died a martyr, A. D. 309.

followers, while connected with him, as a senior contemporary and friend, was Julius Africanus,¹ the first Christian chronographer, and the forerunner of the more celebrated Eusebius. The Antiochian presbyters, Dorotheus² and Lucian,³ were the founders of another school, which was destined by its sober grammatical and historical exegesis to form a powerful counterpoise to the Alexandrian allegorizing spirit, yet probably themselves owed to the great Alexandrian their first scientific impulse. In the West the current of Latin theology continued to flow on in a separate channel, and in almost as copious a stream. Minucius Felix,⁴ an eminent jurist, probably of proconsular Africa, wrote an eloquent and effective defence of the Christian faith, in the form of a dialogue, but he belongs to a time somewhat earlier than Cyprian; Novatian, the schismatic Roman bishop, discoursed ably and learnedly on the Trinity, and on the Jewish laws of food; Commodian,⁵ a layman probably of Africa, delivered in barbarous Latin and uncouth hexameters, many excellent counsels to heathens, Jews, and Christians, under the name of "Instructions for the Christian Life;" Victorinus, bishop of Petavium, in the country now called Styria, and who died a martyr in 303, composed commentaries on several books of the Old and New Testaments; Arnobius,⁶ a converted rhetorician of Sicca, in Numidia, of smart but erratic genius, produced late in life an apologetic and polemic work, in which we find more of the pomp of the rhetorician than the sobriety and depth of the Christian divine; and last of all, Lactantius, by the pure Latin style and elegant diction of his apologetic writings, earned for himself the title of the Christian Cicero; but he, like Eusebius, outlived the time of trial, and in his public life and literary labours, belongs rather to the succeeding age.

¹ Ob. 232.² Ob. 290.³ Ob. 311.⁴ A younger contemporary of Tertullian.⁵ Flourished in second half of third century.

Flourished at the close of the third and beginning of the fourth century.

CHAPTER V.

CHRISTIAN LIFE IN THE MARTYR AGE.¹

A. D. 200-313.

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AS from the very day of her birth, and for hundreds of years together, the Church had appeared alone in the form of a servant, and had walked perpetually under the shadow of the Cross, it was natural that alike her general views of the Christian profession and life, and her more prominent and characteristic virtues, should be those which belong especially to suffering times. As her position was that of endurance and of conflict, so calm endurance and victorious conflict were her chiefest ornament and crown. She glorified her divine Master, and was herself glorified in the fires. A patience the most serene, a fortitude the most indomitable, a love to the brethren which overstepped all the limits of nation, kindred, and station, and which shrunk not from the sacrifice of life itself, and an expansive charity even to enemies and strangers till then unknown and undreamt of among men,—these were the peerless jewels, dark yet bright, which flashed on the brow of the Bride, “the Lamb’s wife,” in those days of her widowhood and darkness. Of her sublime patience and constancy we have already witnessed many examples in the foregoing annals of those days of trial; and, coming from the martyr prisons of Perpetua and Felicitas, or of Blandina, we can recognise, even in the high ideal of the ardent Tertullian, a picture in its main lines at least drawn from the life. “Let us try to

¹ The authorities on which this descriptive sketch is founded are too numerous to be referred to in detail, but the student will find them in such works as those of Bingham, Augusti, Riddle, and Coleman, on Christian Antiquities; Bunsen’s Hippolytus; and Neander’s Church History, and Memorials of Christian Life;—to the last of which, especially, I have been much indebted both for important views and illustrative extracts.

form an image of her. Her countenance is tranquil and placid; her forehead is smooth, and marked by no wrinkles of sorrow or of anger; her eyebrows cheerfully unknit; her eyes directed downward, in humility, not in grief; a complexion such as belongs to the unanxious and the innocent. . . . She perfects martyrdom, she consoles the poor, she teaches moderation to the rich, she does not let the weak overstrain themselves, she does not consume the strength of the strong, she rejoices the believer, she allures the heathen, she makes the slave well-pleasing to his master, and his master to God, she is loved in a boy, she is praised in a youth, is honoured in the aged, is beautiful in every sex, in every age. . . . Where God is, there is his foster-daughter. Wherever, therefore, the Spirit of God descends, this divine patience is his inseparable companion. Can the Spirit abide where she does not at the same time find admission? Without his companion and handmaid he will always and everywhere be grieved. This is the nature, and these are the acts of heavenly and genuine,—that is, of Christian patience.”¹ Assuredly a religion which first revealed that

The student, I am sure, will thank me if I give in full the original of this fine passage and a few others, which to attempt translating is to destroy:—

“Fidem munit, pacem gubernat, dilectionem adjuvat, humilitatem instruit, poenitentiam expectat, exomologesin assignat, carnem regit, spiritum servat, linguam frenat, manum continet, tentationes inculcat, scandala pellit, martyria consummat, pauperem consolatur, divitem temperat, infirmum non extendit, valentem non consumit, fidelem delectat, gentilem invitat, servum domino, dominum Deo commendat, feminam exornat, virum approbat, amator in puero, laudatur in juvene, suspicitur in sene; in omni sexu, in omni ætate formosa est. Age jam sis, et etiam habitumque ejus comprehendamus. Vultus illi tranquillus et placidus, frons pura, nulla mæroris aut iræ rugositate contracta; remissa æque in lætum modum supercilia, oculis humilitate non infelicitate dejectis; os taciturnitatis honore signatum; color qualis securis et inoxiis; motus frequens capitis in diabolum et minax risus; ceterum amictus circum pectora candidus, et corpori impressus, ut qui nec inflatur nec inquietatur. Sedit enim in throno spiritus ejus mitissimi et mansuetissimi, qui non turbine glomeratur, non nubilo livet, sed est tenere serenitatis, apertus et simplex, quem tertio vidit Helias.¹ Nam ubi Deus, ibidem et alumna ejus, patientia scilicet. Cum ergo Spiritus Dei descendit individua patientia comitatur eum. Si non cum Spiritu admiserimus, in nobis morabitur semper! Imo nescio cur diutius perseveret. Sine sua comite ac ministra omni loco ac tempore angatur necesse est.”—*De Patientia*, ch. xv.

¹ I Kings xix.; Matt xvii. 3, seq

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bright and holy vision to the eyes of men, and to so great an extent embodied it in life, could not but attract the world's wonder and awe, even while it provoked its bitterest enmity and scorn.

Brotherly
love.

The brotherly love of the early Christians has long since passed into a proverb. "Behold how these Christians love one another!" was the frequent exclamation of the heathen around. Stronger than all the ties of country, kindred, common friendship, mutual interest,—yea, even than life itself, it constituted a mysterious bond, secret but indissoluble, which awoke at once the wonder and the fear of the world, as a power dangerous to society and the state. It formed a vast confederation outside the law, and independent of it, and which had proved in the conflict stronger even than the empire itself. Rome could burn Christians and scatter Churches, but she could not break the bond that united Christians in life and death together. Even the wide gulph which in that old world separated the bond from the free was forgotten in that common sacred brotherhood. The patrician and the slave sat together at the same communion table, and embraced each other in the holy kiss. The slave knew and felt that he was Christ's freeman, and the freeman owned that he was Christ's

General
charity.

bondsman. Nor was her divine charity confined within the limits of her own membership. Like her Master she went forth as a messenger of mercy to the world, and went about everywhere doing good. A stranger for the most part in the court and in the forum, she was familiarly known in prisons, in mines, and in the homes of suffering and of sorrow. Such works of mercy Tertullian speaks of as the common and everyday occupation of the Christian matron, and condemns mixed marriages of Christians with Pagans especially as interfering with their discharge. It was no vain boast when the martyr Laurentius pointed to the Church's poor as her true riches

and glory. In times of public calamity, her noble self-sacrifice occasionally displayed itself in such a manner as to compel the homage of the world itself. During the plague at Alexandria in the reign of Gallienus, the Christians tended the sick, and buried the dead, from whom their heathen relatives had fled in terror, and in Carthage near the same time the streets were literally covered with corrupting corpses, and a fearful increase of the pestilence had become in consequence imminent, when the heroic heart of Cyprian, rising with the danger, urged him forward to stand between the living and the dead. He assembled his clergy and people, and after an animating exhortation, organized and sent them forth on the mission of mercy. The dead were soon buried, the sick tended and relieved, and the dreaded danger averted. Thus did the Church, treading in the footsteps of her Lord, know how to bless them that cursed her, and to pray for them that despitefully used her and persecuted her.

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As the whole world, as it then existed, presented itself to the minds of the Christians as a vast organized system of evil, as the very embodiment on earth of that kingdom and power of darkness from which divine grace had redeemed them, the most prominent ideas of the Christian life and calling were those of *resistance* and of *separation*. The world they saw before them was not God's world, but the devil's world; in it, therefore, they could have no interest and no place, and their one duty in regard to it was to stand apart from, and to fight against it. Their one business on earth was to escape the world's pollutions, and to wage a ceaseless war against the world's sins. Having gone forth to Christ without the camp of earthly society and fellowship, they could approach that camp no more save as strangers and enemies, with the weapons of a holy warfare in their hands. Hence the favourite images

Idea of the
Christian
calling.Militia
Chris-
tiana.

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under which they delighted to picture forth their holy calling were those of the Christian soldier, and the royal priesthood; the one bodying forth more particularly the idea of resistance, and the other of separation. Of the two the former was perhaps the more familiar and the more spirit-stirring. Consecrated from the first by the burning words of the greatest of the apostles, whose heroic soul ever caught fire at the very thought, it was in harmony with all the most vivid and impressive associations of the age. The power of Rome lay in her soldiers. The army was the empire. The immortal legions were in men's eyes the very embodiment of every idea of martial heroism and indomitable strength. And shall not the Church have her soldiers too,—soldiers of a nobler mould, and with other weapons than those of earth? If the kingdom of darkness have its legions by which it keeps the world in awe, and extends the limits of its sway, so too should the kingdom of God. So the Christian himself was a soldier, the world a battle-field, and life one long and ceaseless war against the devil, the world, and the flesh. The baptismal vow was the soldier's oath;¹ the Christian's confession or creed which he learned by heart, and which he had ever ready on his tongue, was the soldier's watchword;² the sign of the cross, "the sign of his Master's victory, the sign of the sufferings by which He overcame the kingdom of darkness, the sign on his forehead, was the soldier's badge, like the stigma which was stamped on the arm or hand when a soldier was received into the ranks;"³ their solemn days of fast and prayer, when the Christian warrior stood specially on his watch, were the soldier's stations.⁴ The culminating point of this holy warfare was in the steadfast confession and victorious death of the martyrs; and the conqueror's wreath was the true

¹ Sacramentum militiæ Christianæ.

² Tessera militiæ Christianæ symbolum.

³ Stigma militare.

⁴ Dies stationum.

soldier's crown, compared with which any other were unworthy of the name.¹

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At the time of which we write, the grand idea of the universal priesthood of all true Christians had already begun to fade and become dim in the convictions and feelings of the Church. The gradual revival and growing influence of the Jewish notion of a peculiar sacred or sacerdotal caste, and the broad line of demarcation in consequence drawn between the clergy and the laity, had in some measure overshadowed and obscured the earlier and purer truth. The name and prerogatives of God's priests which belonged to all, were appropriated too exclusively to a favoured few. Still the true primitive faith in this matter had not entirely expired. Grand words, still extant in the writings of some of the teachers of that age, bear witness to the fact that it still possessed a real though relaxed hold of the general Christian consciousness. "All Christians," says Tertullian, "are now in the position of those who were priests under the Old Testament dispensation. The particular Jewish priesthood was a prophetic type of the universal Christian priesthood. Ye are priests, being called for that purpose by Christ. The highest priest, the Great Priest of the heavenly Father, Christ, since he hath clothed us with himself (for as many of you as are baptized have put on Christ), has 'made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.'" And again: "We are under a delusion if we believe that what is not permitted to the priests, is permitted to the laity. Are not we laics also priests?" And to the same effect Justin Martyr a few years before: "We are through Jesus Christ devoted as one man to God the creator of the universe. Through the name of his first begotten Son we put off our defiled garments,—that is, our sins, and being influenced by the word of his calling, we are the

¹ See Tertullian, *de corona militis*. To his ardent soul the crowning of any other soldier than that of Christ, seemed a desecration of so high and holy a symbol.

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true high-priestly race of God, as God himself testifies, saying, that in every place among the Gentiles pure and acceptable sacrifices shall be offered to him." And finally: "All righteous persons," writes Irenæus, "have the dignity of priests."

Ascetic
tenden-
cies.

It was natural in such an age that the Church's opposition to the world, whether under the aspect of resistance or of separation, should often assume a form somewhat ascetic and extreme. In the ardour of her first love, and the overwhelming sense of the abyss of ruin from which she had escaped, she was little in a frame to discriminate nicely between the evil that was in the world, and the few grains of good that might remain in a system fundamentally and radically corrupt. The whole frame and course of things, in fact, as then existing in society around her she was accustomed to regard as simply bad and godless,—a thing not to be reformed, but destroyed; not to be sanctified and turned to holy use, but to be renounced and left behind. As it is with a young and ardent convert from a life of sin, in any age or country, Christians naturally shrunk with horror not only from their whole past life itself, but even from those outward circumstances and relations connected with it, which, though in themselves innocent or good, had been to them defiled and mixed up with evil. Hence their predominant idea of Christian holiness was rather that of separation than of consecration,—forsaking all *for* God, than devoting all *to* God. They would escape the pernicious abuse of God's gifts not by their *use*, but by their *disuse*. They would *go out of* the world, that they might not be *of* the world. A deep-seated principle of the old philosophy, both among the oriental and hellenic nations, fell in with this tendency, and entered more and more as an influential element into the religious life of the age. The manifest and immemorial thralldom of the soul of man, in the fetters of sense, gave birth to the notion that matter was itself the principle of evil, and the true antagonist of

the life of the spirit. Some regarded it merely as a clog or incumbrance to the soul, others as an active and malignant power for evil, but all alike as essentially and in its very nature adverse to all the higher and diviner impulses. The outer life of sense and the inner life of the spirit were set in opposition, as two contrary and incompatible spheres. To enter the one you must escape from the other. To die to the one is to live to the other. To deny and conquer sense is to deny and conquer sin. The mortification of the body is the crucifixion of the flesh. This principle deeply coloured the whole stream of ancient thought and speculation on religious subjects; and though contrary to the whole spirit of Christianity, which in the Incarnation of the Eternal Word, consecrated our whole humanity, alike its inner and its outer life, to God, found an early lodgment within the Church, and lent a powerful impulse to the morbid, ascetic tendencies which the circumstances of the times had already generated. Ardent and aspiring spirits shrank from matter and all material delights as they would shrink from sin, and sought the palm of the Christian conqueror, not by subduing the world to God, but by trampling it under foot. The true evangelical combat between nature and grace, the flesh and the spirit, was narrowed into a mere Platonic conflict between the claims and desires of the body and the higher behests of the soul. All outward and sensuous enjoyments, social pleasures, conjugal and domestic joys, were condemned, or at least depreciated, as things which, if not themselves essentially evil, were yet incompatible with the highest style of good. He who used these things aright, and sanctified them to the service of God and man, did well; he who renounced and forsook them for Christ's sake did better. The idea of the peculiar sanctity of celibacy as a higher and purer state than that of married life had already found entrance. The holy virgin occupied a more exalted sphere, and attained a higher style of Christianity than the holy matron. Even

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those sacred ties which the Creator had ordained, and which Christ had blessed, were regarded as in some sort defiled by the flesh. Thus there were everywhere a class of professed ascetics, a kind of spiritual athletes, who, disdainng the ordinary and common-place fight of faith, girded themselves to the great achievement of what they deemed a higher sanctity. Renouncing their possessions and goods for the benefit of the poor, withdrawing from all common and promiscuous society, and renouncing all the joys of home and kindred, they devoted themselves to a retired and mortified life, dividing their time between acts of devotion, study of the Sacred Scriptures, and works of usefulness. These were the true successors of the ascetic philosophers of the old pagan world, whose general habits of life they followed, and whose peculiar costume—the philosopher's cloak—they assumed as their distinctive badge.¹ Such ascetic tendencies as these infected more or less the most enlightened and best men of that age, and were often associated in their most extreme form with the most ardent and exalted piety. They were the natural reaction from the whole state of things in the society around, in which it was so hard to use the world without abusing it, and in which the best things were almost inextricably bound up with the vilest and the worst. Still they were none the less on that account morbid tendencies, and exercised, as time wore on, a more and more malignant influence on the whole development of Christian doctrine and practice. From their very nature they tended to confuse and obscure the very idea of the Christian life; to substitute outward forms for inward realities; to confound true holiness with an outward factitious purity; to foster a proud self-sufficiency in the peculiar few, and an easy laxity in the common-place and promiscuous many. What motive remained to the ordinary Christian to covet the highest gifts and emulate the highest attainments in

¹ See Appendix—*Rise of Monasticism.*

Christian holiness, when by the very circumstances of his position he was doomed to a lower sphere of sanctity—CHAPTER
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 when he might indeed be godly, but could never in the full sense of the word be pure?

The true counterpoise to all such false asceticism was Family
 the Christian family, to which the gospel imparted a new life.
 character and sanctity. Purifying the marriage bond from the corruptions of polygamy, and restoring woman to her true position as the meet and equal companion of man, she may be said to have given back to the world the very idea of home, with all the holy and blessed associations bound up with the name. Yet even here we trace the influence of the same stern ascetic spirit we have just referred to. With much that is beautiful and true in regard to this subject, we still miss, in the extant literature of that age, those bright and joyous views of home and home life which are happily so familiar in modern times. The following picture of a holy marriage union, from the ardent pen of Tertullian, exhibits, after all, only the comparative happiness of a Christian over a heathen or a mixed marriage, rather than the absolute happiness of the married life itself; while over the whole canvas there lingers a certain sombre hue of austere severity, congenial alike to the writer and the age. It is observable, too, that while much is said of the holy companionship of the wedded pair themselves, in faith, in prayer, and in works of mercy, there is no sound heard of those glad voices of children which in happier times fill Christian homes with the melody of joy and health:—"How can we express," says he, "the happiness of a Christian marriage? How can we find words to express the happiness of that marriage which the Church effects, and the oblation confirms, and the blessing seals, and angels report, and the Father ratifies? What a union of two believers, with one hope, one discipline, one service, one spirit, and one flesh! Together they pray, together they prostrate

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themselves, and together keep their fasts, teaching one another, exhorting one another, bearing up one another. They are together at the Church and at the Lord's Supper; they are together in straits, in persecutions, and in times of deliverance; neither conceals anything from the other; neither avoids the other; neither is a burden to the other; freely the sick are visited, and the needy relieved; alms without torture; sacrifices¹ without scruple; daily diligence without hindrance; no using the sign² by stealth; no hurried salutation;³ no silent benediction; psalms and hymns resound between the two, and they vie with each other who shall sing best to their God. Christ rejoices on hearing and beholding such things; to such persons he sends his peace."⁴ There is a rich and sacred light, doubtless, on that vivid picture of domestic life seventeen centuries ago; but it is a light surely less of earth than of heaven. In truth, the circumstances of these sad times were little calculated to generate either bright home thoughts or warm and sunny home associations. When men for the kingdom of heaven's sake had to die daily, it was well that they should hold but loosely even the holiest and the best joys of earth. When a great gulf often separated husband

¹ Gifts presented at the Holy Table.

² That is, the sign of the cross, used furtively, lest it should be seen by a pagan husband or wife.

³ Of a fellow-Christian, hastily done, lest it should attract the notice of a heathen partner.

⁴ Unde sufficiamus ad enarrandam felicitatem ejus matrimonii quod ecclesia conciliat, et confirmat oblatio, et obsignat benedictio, angeli renunciant, Pater rato habet? Nam nec in terris filii sine consensu patrum recte et jure nubunt. Quale jugum fidelium duorum, unius spei, unius disciplinæ, ejusdem servitutis! Ambo fratres, ambo conservi, nulla spiritus carnisve discretio. Atquin vere duo in carne unâ; ubi caro una, unus et spiritus. Simul orant, simul voluntantur, et simul jejunia transigunt, alterutro docentes, alterutro hortantes, alterutro sustinentes. In ecclesiâ Dei pariter utrique, pariter in convivio Dei, pariter in angustiis, in persecutionibus, in refrigeriis; neuter alterum celat, neuter alterum vitat, neuter alteri gravis est; libere aeger visitatur, indigens sustentatur; eleemosinæ sine tormento, sacrificia sine scrupulo, quotidiana diligentia sine impedimento; non furtiva signatio, non trepida gratulatio, non muta benedictio; sonant inter duos psalmi et hymni, et mutuo provocant quis melius Deo suo cantet. Talia Christus videns et audiens gaudet; his pacem suam mittit; ubi duo, ibi et ipse; ubi et ipse, ibi et malus non est.—*Tertull. ad uxorem*, ii. 9.

and wife, by the adherence of one or the other to the old pagan idolatry, when the moral atmosphere all around, amid which the rising race had to be reared, was such as to make it indeed a solemn thing that a child was born into the world, and when the sword of persecution perpetually hung over the head of the Church, and a sudden burst of imperial or popular vengeance might any day turn the happiest home into a desolation, it was not wonderful if men often thought rather of the pains of married life than of its blessings, and scarcely dreamed of any true and abiding home but that above. It remained, then, as in the days of the apostles, that they that had wives should be as though they had none; they that rejoiced as though they rejoiced not; and that they should use the world as not abusing it, as remembering that the fashion thereof passeth away.

As in their inward life, so in their outward dress and behaviour, the Christians of those days, especially those of the more earnest sort, were distinguished by a simple and modest gravity, which contrasted strongly with the luxurious display of the heathen around. To this austere rule, indeed, some of laxer views demurred as creating a needless singularity; but the great leaders of the Church maintained it as the true and becoming armour of the Christian soldier. "If the duties of friendship," says Tertullian, "and of kind offices to the heathen, call you, why not appear with your own proper weapons—so much the rather when you have to do with strangers to the faith? Let there be a distinction between the handmaids of the devil and those of God, that you may be an example to them, and that they may be edified by you, that God may be glorified in your body, as the apostle says. But he is glorified by chastity, and by an attire that accords with chastity." "This it is," he again exclaims, "which makes us the light of the world—our goodness. But goodness—at all events, true and com-

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plete goodness—loves not darkness, but rejoices to be seen, and exults even in being pointed at. It is not enough that Christian chastity should be; it should also be seen; for so great ought to be its fulness, that it should flow over from the mind into the manners, and rise up from the conscience into the countenance.” Indeed, as the same writer remarks, there was little room or pretence for the display of showy attire by those who in those days lived a Christian life. When they “went neither to the temples nor to public shows, nor even knew of the heathen feast-days”—when almost the only errands which usually took a modest Christian female out of doors were “to visit a sick brother, to present a sacrifice, or to hear the word of God”—to have emulated the vain fashions of the world, would have been rather to seek than to yield to temptation. At all times, but especially in such times, the true female adorning is not that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and putting on of apparel, but that of the hidden man of the heart, shining out through the transparent vesture of the life.¹

Religious
worship.

If we pass now from the house to the Church, we shall find a good measure of the pure scriptural simplicity still remaining. It was a transition period, indeed, between the clear sun-light of apostolic times and the rich and gorgeous splendour of a ceremonious and sensuous worship; but there was still more of the former than of the latter. The Scriptures were still read in the congregation, as an essential part of worship, in the vulgar tongue. The prayers were probably, to some extent, liturgical, but not to the exclusion of the free utterances of the spirit. The sacraments were still administered essentially as in apostolic times, with but few and slight ceremonial additions. The feasts and fasts of the Church

¹ See Tert. *De Cultu Faminarum*, and *De Vestitu*; and Cyprian, *De Habitu Virginum*, and *De Lapsis*.

were few, and turned exclusively on the great central facts of the Christian faith.¹ The Friday and the Wednesday of each week were observed as fast-days, and the Sunday as a festival—the former in commemoration of the Saviour's passion, and the latter of his victory, while similar annual celebrations at Easter-tide more emphatically proclaimed the same great events.² The psalmody was simple and solemn, and the preaching plain and unadorned, consisting, for the most part, of a mere expository application of the scripture read, without rhetorical elaboration or oratorical display. The stated hours of daily prayer observed by the Jewish Church—the third, the sixth, and the ninth of the day—were generally adopted and followed by the early Christians; but no attempt was made to confine the true spirit of supplication to such set bounds. “The whole life of the Christian,” said one of the Church's greatest teachers, expressing thereby only the general voice of the Church in his day, “should be one great continuous prayer;” and though the season of Pentecost was observed in commemoration of the gift of the Spirit and the new birth of the Church, he who is indeed risen with Christ, “enjoys a perpetual Whitsuntide.”³ Then, as in every other age, the spirit of prayer was the life of the Church. Take

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V.

Prayer

¹ These were chiefly Easter, Pentecost, and the Epiphany. The last originated in the East, and was observed on the 6th of January, in celebration of the baptism of Christ and his manifestation as the Messiah.

² The Paschal, or Easter festival, was divided into a *πάσχα σταυρώσιμον*, commemorative of the Redeemer's death, and a *πάσχα αναστάσιμον*, commemorative of his resurrection. The one was a day of fast and mourning, the other of joy and thanksgiving. But such, in the view of the Church, was the grandeur and importance of those events, that two single days seemed inadequate for their due celebration, and the seasons alike of fast and festival were lengthened out for many days before and after. The former, after remaining for some time unsettled, was gradually fixed as of forty days' duration, and hence called the *quadragesima* (*τεσσαρακοστή*) of the Christian year. The other extended from Easter to Pentecost, and became, in like manner, the *quingagesima*. During the whole of that latter period, which was thus regarded as one perpetual festival, the communion was daily celebrated, fasting was interdicted, and the worshippers stood at prayer as on the Lord's day, instead of the customary kneeling. The fortieth day of this period was signalized by special solemnities, as the Feast of the *Ascension*.

³ Οὕτω γὰρ μόνως τὸ Ἄδιαλείπτως προσεύχεσθε ἐκδέξασθαι δυνάμεθα ὡς δυνατὸν ὄν, εἰρημένοι, εἰ πάντα τὸν βίον τοῦ ἁγίου μίαν συναπτομένην μεγάλην εἴποιμεν εὐχὴν.—*Origen*, *Περὶ εὐχῆς*, § 17.

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the following grand words as examples of the manner in which her great teachers and leaders thought and spoke of it: "Under the arms of prayer," exclaims the fervid Tertullian, "let us guard the standard of our Commander. Praying, let us await the trumpet of the angel. All the angels pray. Every creature prays. The Lord himself prayed." And again: "What has not God granted to prayer, offered up in spirit and in truth? for such prayer he has required. . . . The prayer of the old covenant delivered from the flames, and wild beasts, and hunger, and yet had not received its form from Christ. But how much more efficacious is prayer now! It does not place the angel of the dew in the midst of the flames (Dan. iii. 28), nor shut the mouths of lions (Dan. vi.), nor bring the dinner of rustics to the hungry (2 Kings iv.) The grace now vouchsafed to men does not take away the sense of suffering; but it arms with endurance men that are suffering, feeling, grieving. By its power it increases grace, that faith may know what it may expect from the Lord, being conscious when it suffers in the name of God. Formerly, prayer brought down plagues, routed hostile armies, prevented beneficial rains. But now, the prayer of righteousness averts the divine wrath, keeps watch for enemies, and pleads for persecutors. Christ has conferred on prayer all power for good. Therefore it knows nothing save to call back the souls of the departed from the way of death itself, to renovate the weak, to heal the sick, to free from the power of evil spirits, to loosen the bonds of the innocent. It washes away sin, repels temptation, extinguishes persecution, consoles the feeble-minded, delights the magnanimous, guides travellers, stills the waves, nourishes the poor, controls the rich, raises the fallen, props the falling, and preserves those that stand. Prayer is the bulwark of faith—our arms and weapons against the adversary who waylays us on every side. Therefore let us never go

about unarmed.”¹ And in a similar spirit Origen, in other respects so different, yet one at the mercy-seat: “How much would each one among us have to recount of the efficacy of prayer, if he only were thankfully to recall God’s mercies! Souls which have been long unfruitful, becoming conscious of their death, and fructified by the Holy Spirit through persevering prayer, have given forth words of salvation full of the intuitions of truth. How many enemies have been driven back when thousands in the service of the evil one have entered the field against us, and threatened to annihilate our faith! But our confidence was in these words, ‘Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God;’ for verily ‘an horse is a vain thing for safety.’ How many have been exposed

¹ Nos sumus veri adoratores et veri sacerdotes, qui spiritu orantes spiritu sacrificamus orationem Dei propriam et acceptabilem, quam scilicet requisivit, quam sibi prospexit. Hanc de toto corde devotam, fide pastam, veritate curatam, innocentia integram, castitate mundam, agape coronatam, cum pompâ operum bonorum inter psalmos et hymnos deducere ad Dei altare debemus, omnia nobis a Deo impetraturam.

Quid enim orationi de spiritu et veritate venienti negavit Deus, qui eam exigit? Legimus et audimus et credimus quanta documenta efficacîe ejus. Vetus quidem oratio et ab ignibus et a bestiis et ab inedia liberabat, et tamen non a Christo acceperat formam. Cæterum quanto amplius oratur oratio Christianorum! Non roris angelum in mediis ignibus sistit, nec ora leonibus obstruit, nec esurientibus rusticorum prandium transfert, nullum sensum passionis delegata gratia avertit; sed patientes et sentientes et dolentes sufferentia instruit, virtute ampliat gratiam, ut sciat fides, quid a Domino consequatur, intelligens, quid pro Dei nomine patiat. Sed et retro oratio plagas irrogabat, fundebat hostium exercitus, imbrium utilia prohibebat. Nunc vero oratio justitiæ omnem iram Dei avertit, pro inimicis excubat, pro persequentibus supplicat. Mirum, si aquas cælestes extorquere novit, quæ potuit et ignes impetrare? Sola est oratio quæ Deum vincit. Sed Christus eam nihil mali novit operari. Omuem illi virtutem de bono contulit. Itaque nihil novit, nisi defunctorum animas de ipso mortis itinere vocare, debiles reformare, ægros remediare, dæmoniacos expiare, claustra carceris aperire, vincula innocentium solvere. Eadem diluit delicta, tentationes repellit, persecutiones extinguit, pusillanimos consolatur, magnanimos oblectat, peregrinantes deducit, fluctus mitigat, latrones obstupescit, alit pauperes, regit divites, lapsos erigit, cadentes suspendit, stantes continet. Oratio murus est fidei, arma et tela nostra adversus hominem qui nos undique observat. Itaque nunquam inermes incedamus. Die stationis, nocte vigiliæ meminerimus. Sub armis orationis signum nostri imperatoris custodiamus, tubam angeli expectemus orantes. Orant etiam angeli omnes. Orat omnis creatura. Orant pecudes, et feræ (Ps. civ. 21), et genua declinant et egredientes de stabulis ac speluncis, ad cælum non otiosi ore suscipiunt, vibrantes spiritu suo movere. Sed et aves nunc exsurgentes eriguntur ad cælum, et alarum crucem pro manibus extendunt, et dicunt aliquid quod oratio videatur. Quid ergo amplius de officio orationis? Etiam ipse Dominus oravit, cui sit honor et virtus in secula seculorum.—*Tert. de Oratione*, § 23, 24.

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to temptations more burning than flame, and yet have come out of them unhurt, without even the smell of the hostile flame having passed upon them! And what shall I further say? How often has it happened that those who were exposed to wild beasts, to evil spirits, and to cruel men, have muzzled them by prayer, so that they have not been able to touch with their teeth those who were the members of Christ. We know also that many who were deserters from the statutes of the Lord, and were almost swallowed up by death, have been saved from destruction by repentance, and 'God has wiped away the tears from their eyes.'" Let us hear one voice more: "We who live in Christ, the true Sun," exclaims Cyprian, "and therefore in the true day-light, must fill the whole day with prayer; and when night succeeds to day, this also must not interrupt our prayers; for to the children of light there is day even at night. For when is he without light who has light in his soul? Or when are the sun and day wanting to him to whom Christ is sun and day? Renewed in spirit, and regenerated by God's grace, let us strive to be here what we shall be hereafter. Since in the kingdom of heaven we shall have pure day without the interruption of night, let us be awake for prayer by night as well as by day. Since there we shall pray and praise without cessation, let us here also not cease to pray and to praise."¹ It is only by listening to such words as these that we can fully comprehend the true life of the Martyr Church, and learn the

¹ Quod si in Scripturis Sanctis sol verus et dies verus est Christus, hora nulla a Christianis excipitur, quominus frequenter ac semper Deus debeat adorari, ut qui in Christo, hoc est in sole et in die vero, sumus, insistamus per totum diem precibus et oremus. . . . Nos, fratres delectissimi, qui in Domini luce semper sumus, qui meminimus et tenemus, quid esse acceptâ gratiâ cœperimus, computemus noctem pro die. Ambulare nos credamus semper in lumine, non impediamur a tenebris quas evasimus. Nulla sint horis nocturnis precum damna, nulla orationum pigra et ignava dispendia. Per Dei indulgentiam recreati spiritaliter et renati, imitemur quod futuri sumus. Habituri in regno sine interventu noctis solum diem, sic nocte quasi in lumine vigilemus. Oraturi semper et acturi gratias Deo, hic quoque orare et gratias agere non desinamus. —*Cyp. de Oratione Dominicâ*, §§ 35, 36, (ed. Goldhorn, Lipsiæ, 1833.)

secret of that hidden might which sustained her alike in fields of holy toil and in the fires of martyrdom.

CHAPTER
V.

With such signs, however, of healthy and free scriptural life, there were already plain enough tokens of a tendency to a more outward and ceremonial form of worship. The spirit of external Judaism, at first apparently extinguished, had revived again, and was rapidly gaining head. The priest was beginning to take the place of the presbyter—the Church to overshadow the Saviour. The principle of symbolism in religious worship had gained a firm lodgment, and was rapidly developing itself. They stood at prayer on Sundays, in contradistinction from the usual kneeling posture, in allusion to the Saviour's rising. The chrism, or anointing with oil, was added to the water in the sacrament of baptism. The sign of the cross on forehead or on breast, both in times of solemn worship and on the various occasions of daily life, was frequent, and was connected often with a superstitious notion of a certain mysterious power in driving away evil spirits, and shielding the soul from mortal harm.

Symptoms
of corrup-
tion.

The doctrine of the sacraments, though in the main comparatively pure, was still tinged in some degree by the same tendency. A mysterious virtue was connected with the sign which belongs only to the thing signified. Baptism, if not itself regeneration, was so closely united to it that it was called by the same name. It was "the water of life, by which we are born anew;"¹ it was "our second nativity into a new man;"² it was "the principle and fount of divine and heavenly gifts."³ The exaggeration was natural—however in its tendency perilous—at

Sacra-
menta

¹ ὕδωρ τῆς ζωῆς ἐξ οὗ ἀνεγεννήθημεν.—*Justin Martyr.*

² Nativitas secunda in novum hominem.—*Cyprian.*

³ Χαρισμάτων θεῶν ἀρχὴν καὶ πηγὴν.—*Origen.*

With these compare other expressions, such as the following:—
 Ἀναβάνομεν καρποφοροῦντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ.—*Ep. Bar.* Ascendunt vitæ assignati.
 —*Pastor Hermæ.* Supervenit spiritus de coelis—caro spiritualiter mundatur.—*Tertullian.* Nativitas quæ est in baptismo filios Dei generat.—*Firmilian.*

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a time when the adult baptism of new converts from heathenism was common, and when thus the solemn rite constituted in very deed the awful and irrevocable transition-point between the world and Christ—the old life and the new. In the Lord's supper the traces of incipient corruption are less clear. It was a sacrifice, indeed, but a sacrifice only of thanksgiving. Christ is really present in the sacred banquet, and the holy emblems are to the true worshippers in very deed the body and blood of the Lord; but there is nothing to show that the Presence they understood was any other than a spiritual presence in the ordinance and in the heart of the true spiritual worshipper. The figment of transubstantiation, or of any essential change in the material elements, was as yet undreamt of.¹ Such as it was, this sacrament was very frequently observed, and formed the central point of all Christian worship. It was the table at which the children of God delighted daily to feed. Indeed, in some places, as in Proconsular Africa, the celebration was literally daily; while after the service the consecrated elements were borne by the deacons to the sick and to prisoners, or carried home by the worshippers for domestic use in an early service, by which they sought to consecrate the dawn of each day to God.

Favourite
symbols.

The strong bias to an outward and symbolic worship which then prevailed, makes it the more remarkable that no images or pictures of any kind were at this time admitted into the house of God. The fact, too, is the more striking, when we consider that the pictorial representation of Christian ideas and Christian truths was at the same time much in use in common life. On the walls of their dwellings, on signet rings, and on drinking vessels, they loved to trace the figures and the signs of those heavenly things which were ever in their hearts. The Good Shepherd carrying the lamb on his shoulders; the holy,

¹ See Appendix—*Doctrine of the Lord's Supper.*

mystic Dove; the swift ship bearing before the wind, figuring the Church and its precious freight of souls bound for the eternal shore; the harp that bespoke the melody of joy, and the Christian's life of thankful praise; the anchor of hope;¹ the crown, the palm, the hart, the vine; and, finally, the fish and the fisherman, partly in allusion to the miraculous draught, partly to Christians as born of water, and partly with a more mystic allusion to the name of Jesus;²—such signs as these, rudely sketched or graven by unskilled hands on the most familiar objects of daily life, meet us everywhere, and form the touching memorials of a simple, child-like faith, whose whole life centred in Christ, and whose conversation was in heaven.

At a time when the dangers and the sacrifices of the Christian discipleship might have seemed a sufficient guarantee against a light or hypocritical profession of the faith, other precautions of the most stringent kind were adopted. A vigilant discipline guarded the entrance to the sacred pale, and sought to separate between the "precious and the vile." A protracted probation of from two to three years, during which the candidate was under instruction, and hence called a *catechumen*,³ preceded his final admission to the Church by baptism. Meanwhile he was already regarded as in some sort belonging to the Christian community, and might be present and take part in the public services of the Church, with the exception only of the communion, which was the privilege of the faithful alone. In course of time the system became more complicated and mechanical. The cate-

Disciplina

Catechumens.

¹ A more questionable emblematic sign was the fabled *Phœnix*, as a symbol of the resurrection.

² The letters of the word *ἰχθύς*, forming the first letters of the title *Ἰησοῦς Χριστός Θεοῦ υἱος Σωτήρ*. The monogram of the name *Christ*, formed by intertwining the letters X and P, sometimes with the addition of the letters *a* and *ω* disposed on either side, was also very common.

³ *Κατηχουμένους*, being instructed or receiving instruction, properly by oral teaching.

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chumens were divided into different classes, according to their period of probation, to each of which a distinctive standing and distinctive privileges were assigned. At first there were two¹ such ranks or classes, afterwards three.² The first were allowed and bound to attend the sermon; the second took part in some of the solemn prayers of the Church, and received, kneeling, the benediction of the bishop; the third, who stood already on the very threshold of baptism, might join in everything but the highest act of Christian worship itself.³ At last, the period of hope and of preparation is ended, and the candidate girds himself by solemn prayer and fasting for the most important and final act of all. Then, on some great feast of the Church—at Easter, or Whitsuntide, or the Epiphany—he approaches the mystic waters, and after solemnly renouncing the “devil and all his works,”⁴ and articulately expressing the confession of his faith, is by trine immersion, anointing with oil, and laying on of hands,⁵ consecrated to the service of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and bids farewell to his old life for ever. Last of all, the holy kiss and first communion sealed his complete incorporation with the sacred brotherhood, and his citizenship in that kingdom which is not of this world.

If the first entrance within the sacred pale was thus difficult, still more so was the return of those who, by apostasy or grievous sin, had forfeited the Christian name. Once cast out, according to the apostolic

¹ Distinguished by Tertullian as *novitiosi* and *edocti* or *aquam adituri*. Origen also speaks only of two classes.

² As described in the *Apostolic Constitutions*, which may probably be regarded as representing the type of Christian worship about the beginning of the fourth century. The three classes were denominated thus: 1. *Audientes*, ἀκροῶμενοι; 2. *Genuflectentes*, γονυκλίνοντες; 3. *Competentes*, φωτιζόμενοι.

³ See Appendix—*The Catechumenate*.

⁴ *Abrenunciare diabolo et pompæ et angelis ejus*. To this was added, in the third century, a form of *exorcism*, or setting free from the power of the devil, hitherto in use only in the case of those supposed to be possessed by evil spirits.

⁵ In the West, when the bishop himself had not administered baptism, the imposition of hands and the chrism were afterwards imparted by way of confirmation (*confirmatio*, *consignatio*).

command, from the communion of the faithful,¹ nothing short of the most decided proof of repentance and change of life could procure their restoration. Here also, as time wore on, and as apostasies and scandals multiplied, the disciplinary code became more complicated, rigid, and precise. The freedom of the spirit gave place to the iron uniformity of the letter. For three, four, five years, the trembling penitent stood knocking suppliantly at that awful gate which had been closed against him. By slow successive stages, each lasting a year or more, he approached those high and holy privileges which the sin of a moment had forfeited. First arrayed in the garments of mourning, he stands at the door, and entreats the clergy and people to receive him back again.² Next, he ventures within the threshold, and, while still standing in a place apart from the faithful flock, listens from afar to the Scripture lessons and the sermon.³ Then he advances a step nearer, and is permitted to be present and kneel at the common prayers of the congregation.⁴ At last he is permitted to join in all the services of the Church, with the exception only of the holy communion, and even this to stand by and witness.⁵ His probation is now complete. A solemn public confession of his sin,⁶ the Church's absolution, and the fraternal kiss, seal his restoration to the fellowship and the privileges of the Church of God.

A regimen so severe could not fail in a great measure to defeat itself. The laxest of all laws is that which is too stern and terrible to be enforced. When transgressors are numerous, and public opinion and feeling, which ought to be the strength of law, is arrayed against it, the execution of its full penalty becomes impracticable. It was thus with the disciplinary code of the martyr age. While, according to its strict letter, the period of penitential probation could be shortened only in the case of

CHAPTER
V.
Penitential system.

¹ Excommunicatio.

⁴ The υπόπτωσις.

² The πρόσκλαυσις.

⁵ The σύστασις.

³ The ἀκρόασις.

⁶ Εξομολόγησις.

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mortal sickness, all manner of pretences were found for an exceptional lenity. In times of fiery trial, the indiscriminate enforcement of so stern a discipline on all who, in a moment of weakness, had given way, seemed abhorrent to every instinct of justice and mercy; and even confessors from their prisons hastened, as we have seen, to interpose between the severity of the Church and her weak and erring members. Letters of commendation¹ emanating from so venerable a quarter, often, it must be confessed, with little judgment or consideration, became one of the most common passports to ecclesiastical absolution and reconciliation, and opened the door to a corrupt and arbitrary laxity, more injurious, perhaps, than the impartial behests of the most stern and rigid law. Meanwhile, in the midst of these confusions and corruptions, a party even more austere than the Church herself arose, who boldly cut the knot of all difficulties by refusing all reconciliation to those who had been guilty of mortal sin²—such as theft, murder, adultery, or apostasy—and adjourning the consideration of every such case to the judgment of the final day.³

Doctrinal
views.

Of the faith of the Martyr Church, so far as it formed the subject of theological investigation and controversy, we have already spoken in connection with the lives of those great teachers who were its leading expounders and

¹ *Libelli pacis*.

² The division of sins into *delicta venialia* and *delicta mortalia*—or those which were and those which were not consistent with a state of grace and salvation—was already generally recognised. See, *e.g.*, Tertullian *De Pudicitia*, § 20. The only question was, whether those who, after baptism, had been guilty of the latter, and so cut themselves off from the communion of the Church, could receive ecclesiastical absolution, and be admitted again to the fellowship of the faithful. The more lenient party, and the Catholic Church generally, maintained the affirmative; the more rigid schools and sects the negative. There was at all times a tendency to the division of the Church into a more and a less rigoristic party, which only at intervals came forth into more active manifestation, as in Montanism, Novatianism, and in the next period Donatism. See further in Appendix: *Venial and Mortal Sins*.

³ For some further details, especially on the worship of the Martyr Church, see Appendix—*Form of Worship in the Martyr Age*.

champions. The central point of debate, in this period as in the preceding, was the doctrine of the incarnation; and the special task of the age was to ascertain and establish the true faith on that fundamental article, alike against Monarchian rationalism on the one hand, and Gnostic mysticism and false spiritualism on the other. At once in the schools of Alexandria and of Carthage were being slowly and laboriously evolved the elements of that great problem which was to be fully and finally solved in the authoritative definitions of the succeeding age. The dogmatic Trinitarianism of the fourth century was struggling in the womb of the third. In the sphere of practical religious teaching, we discern the same marks of a period of transition and of progress. We find in the best writings of that age all those truths which make up the circle of Christian doctrine, and which have in every age formed the aliment of the Christian life, but in a form still comparatively crude and immature. The doctrine of the being of God; of his unity and attributes; of Creation and the Fall; of the divine image in man, lost in Adam, but restored in Christ; of sin and grace; of redemption and eternal life; of angels and the world unseen; of faith, hope, and charity; of death, judgment, heaven, and hell;—all were held and taught by the fathers of the martyr age, substantially as they are held and taught by the great body of orthodox Christians now—only with now and then a certain vagueness of statement or uncertainty of view in regard even to vital points, which was inevitable in an age of transition from a simple traditional faith to a scientific and definite theology. In regard to some questions around which the controversies of after ages raged, and which touch, at the same time, the deepest springs of the religious life, the Martyr Church could not speak clearly, inasmuch as the questions themselves had not yet been raised. The limits of nature and grace, of divine power and human

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agency; the relation and respective functions of faith and good works; predestination, free-will, justification, merit;—these watch-words of many an after controversy had not yet been sounded in the arena of theological debate; and men, accordingly, spoke and wrote on subjects involving those questions with the unguarded and unconscious freedom of those who knew not that they were approaching dangerous ground. Hence their words have been often quoted on this side and on that, of controversies of which they had never heard, and in which, consequently, they never dreamt of taking a part. In general, it may be said that, apart from matters of special controversy, the character of the religious teaching of the period was rather ethical than doctrinal, and dealt more with the outward facts and duties of life, than with inward feelings and experience. In days when men had to wage a life and death combat with outward and tangible enemies in the open arena of the world, they had little time or heart to turn their minds inward, or nicely analyze either the elements of their faith or the hidden workings of their hearts. Hence their religious literature was characteristically practical and ascetic, not doctrinal or experimental; and such subjects as fasting, prayer, patience, martyrdom, alms-giving, and good works, held in the best writings of that age very much the same place of prominence which conversion, justification, and the conflicts of the inner life do now.¹ At the same time, it would be an error to conclude that doctrines which were not prominently set forth or largely discussed were on that account necessarily denied or forgotten. Much, doubtless, in that age, as in every age, was rather taken for granted and silently acted on, as the undoubted faith of

¹ Let the reader, for instance, run his eye over the list of the works of Tertullian or Cyprian, as given in a former chapter, and compare the general cast of the subjects treated with that of our present popular religious literature. How alien from the whole spirit of our age would be a series of religious tracts under such titles as, *De Patientia*, *De Castitate*, *De Pudicitia*, *De Cultu Fæminarum*, &c. &c.

the Church, than dogmatically inculcated and defined. That may be held implicitly which is not taught, or, at least, not largely taught, explicitly—may mingle as a most vital element with the whole stream of religious thought and feeling, though it forms not the theme of a single treatise or formal discourse. This remark applies with special force to a question which has of late years formed the subject of much debate—that of the views entertained by the Martyr Church in regard to the atonement, or expiatory sacrifice of Christ. Two opposite errors on this subject are to be equally avoided. While some, in the interest of a strenuous orthodoxy, have sought in the writings of this age a clear, explicit, and full development of the doctrine which belongs to an after period, others, under the influence of an opposite bias, have obliterated from their pages every trace and shadow of it whatsoever. The truth seems to us to lie midway between the two extremes. The doctrine *is* there, clearly and demonstrably, but, as yet, only in substance and in its elements. It is held, believed, taught, lived on, but not defined or explained. Christ is with them, as with us, the Divine Reconciler and Mediator between God and man.¹ He is the Ransom,² the Sacrifice, the Bearer of the curse³ for us. He died in our stead, “the holy for

The atone-
ment.

¹ Ἦνωσεν οὖν, καθὼς προέφραμεν, τὸν ἄνθρωπον τῷ Θεῷ. Ἐὶ γὰρ μὴ ἄνθρωπος ἐνίκησε τοῦ ἀντίπαλον τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, οὐκ ἂν δικαίως ἐνίκηθῃ ὁ ἐχθρός. Πάλιν τε, εἰ μὴ ὁ Θεὸς ἐδωρήσατο τὴν σωτηρίαν οὐκ ἂν βεβαίως ἔσχομεν αὐτήν. Καὶ εἰ μὴ συνηρώθῃ ὁ ἀνθρώπος τῷ Θεῷ, οὐκ ἂν ἠδυνήθη μετασχεῖν τῆς ἀφθαρσίας. Ἐδεῖ γὰρ τὸν μεσίτην Θεοῦ τε καὶ ἀνθρώπων διὰ τῆς ἰδίας πρὸς ἑκατέρους ἰκεϊότητος εἰς φιλίαν καὶ ἁμωσίαν τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους συναγαγεῖν. Καὶ Θεῷ μὲν παραστήσαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀνθρώποις δὲ γνωρίσαι τὸν Θεόν.—*Adv. Hæres.*, iii. § 7.

² Αὐτὸς τὸν ἴδιον υἱὸν ἀπέδοτο λύτρον ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, τὸν ἅγιον ὑπὲρ ἀνόμων, τὸν ἄκακον ὑπὲρ τῶν κακῶν, τὸν δίκαιον ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀδίκων, τὸν ἀφθαρτον ὑπὲρ τῶν φθαρτῶν, τὸν ἀθάνατον ὑπὲρ τῶν θνητῶν. Τί γὰρ ἄλλο τας ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν ἠδυνήθη καλύψαι, ἢ ἐκεῖνου δικαιοσύνη; ἐν τίνι δικαιοθῆναι δυνατὸν τοὺς ἀνόμους ἡμᾶς καὶ ἀσεβεῖς ἢ ἐν μονῷ τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ.—*Ep. ad Diognet.*, ch. 8, 9.

³ Ἐὶ δὲ οἱ ὑπὸ τὸν νόμον τοῦτον ὑπὸ κατάραν φαίνονται εἶναι διὰ τὸ μὴ πάντα φυλάξαι, οὐχὶ πολὺ μᾶλλον πάντα τὰ ἔθνη φανήσονται ὑπὸ κατάραν ὄντα,

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the unholy, the just for the unjust, the righteous for the unrighteous, the ever-living for the dying.”¹ By his cross and passion he overcame death and hell, broke the fetters of our bondage, and opened to us the gates of eternal life. His perfect and sinless obedience covers our unworthiness, and makes us accepted in the sight of God.¹ Thus they spoke and taught in simple scriptural language, and with little attempt at scientific definition and explanation; but still, in language which in its very terms involved the whole elements of the doctrine as afterwards developed and defined in the orthodox theology of the Church. “Their representations,” says Neander, “were still confused; the germ of the idea of an active and passive satisfaction, indeed, existed, but without any clear development of its meaning.”² They taught, in short, the positive Scripture doctrine on this great article, in positive Scripture language, but without those guarding distinctions and discriminations from opposing errors, which the controversies of the time had not yet rendered necessary. It must be admitted, however, that they sometimes dwelt on the simply moral and spiritual aspect of the Redeemer’s work, or its divine efficacy in revealing the mind of God, embodying the perfect ideal of a holy humanity in Christ, and leading on the souls of men to a divine and heavenly life in union with him, in a manner too exclusive, and so as somewhat to overshadow its higher sacrificial import.³ Laying fast hold, in opposition

καὶ ἐδώκαλατροῦντα καὶ παιδοφθοροῦντα καὶ τὰ ἄλλα κακὰ ἐργαζόμενα ; εἰ οὖν καὶ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ Χριστὸν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐκ παντὸς γένους ἀνθρώπων ὁ Πατὴρ τῶν ὀλων τὰς πάντων κατάρτας ἀναδέξασθαι ἐβουλήθη, εἰδὼς ὅτι ἀναστήσει αὐτὸν σταυρωθέντα καὶ ἀποθανόντα.—*Just. Dial. Tryph.*, § 95.

¹ See note 2, preceding page.

² *Hist. of Dogmas*, vol. i. p. 211—Bohn’s Translation.

³ Quando incarnatus est et homo factus, longam hominum expositionem in scipso recapitulavit, in compendio nobis salutem prestans, ut quod perdidimus in Adam, id est secundum imaginem et similitudinem esse Dei, hoc in Christo Jesu recuperemus.—*Iren. Adv. Hær.*, iii. 88.

Compare with this iii. 18:—Filius hominis factus est, ut assuesceret hominem percipere Deum et assuesceret Deum habitare in homine. And again, ii. 22—Omnes enim venit per semetipsum salvare: omnes, inquam, qui per eum rena-

to Gnostic dreams, of the grand truth, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, they felt, apparently, sometimes as if that truth were all, and expatiated on the power of the Incarnation, without reference, or with little reference, to the merit of the sacrifice. This was especially the case at Alexandria, and formed the chief element of weakness in the theology of Clement and of Origen. There the prevailing custom of representing Christianity as the true and divine philosophy, tended to fix attention rather on the educative and healing influence of the Redeemer's life, than on the vicarious virtue of his cross. Christ was the Teacher, the Leader, the Healer, rather than the Surety and the Sin-bearer.¹ In general, it may be said that the circumstances of these times naturally led men to think of Christ's work rather as a redeeming power than a redeeming sacrifice. In their terrible and ceaseless combats with all the powers of darkness, seen and unseen, they loved to think of their Saviour as a power mightier than them all, and of his work as a grand and everlasting victory over their fell and malignant dominion. He was their great Champion and Captain, who, as he had himself met in single combat their terrible adversary, and vanquished him, would not only clothe them with the spoils of his triumph, but lead them on to similar victory and glory. He had conquered, and would still go on conquering and to conquer, and nothing can harm

seuntur in Deum, infantes et parvulos et pueros et juvenes et seniores. Ideo per omnem venit aetatem, et infantibus infans factus, sanctificans infantes; in parvulis parvulus, sanctificans hanc ipsam habentes aetatem, simul et exemplum illis pietatis effectus et justitiae et subjectionis: in juvenibus juvenis, exemplum juvenibus fians et sanctificans Dominus; sic et senior in senioribus, ut sit perfectus magister in omnibus, non solum secundum expositionem veritatis, sed et secundum aetatem, sanctificans simul et seniores, exemplum ipsis quoque fians; deinde et usque ad mortem pervenit, ut sit primogenitus ex mortuis, ipse primum tenens in omnibus, princeps vitae, prior omnium et praecedens omnes.

¹"Ἔστιν οὖν ὁ παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν Λόγος διὰ παρανήσιων θεραπευτικὸς τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τῆς ψυχῆς παθῶν . . . Λόγος δὲ ὁ πατρικὸς μόνος ἐστίν, ἀνθρωπίνων ἰατρὸς ἀβρωστημάτων παιῶνιος καὶ ἐπωδὸς ἅγιος νοσοῦσης ψυχῆς.—*Ραβδ.* 1, 2.

Ergo quum statuisset Deus doctorem virtutis mittere ad homines, renasci eum denuo in carne praecepit, et ipsi homini similem fieri cui dux et comes et magister esset futurus.—*Lact. Inst.*, iv. 11.

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them, if only in faith and patience they follow him. Death and hell are slain enemies at his feet, and, in and with him, at theirs. On that strong rock they leant back—in that mighty name they rejoiced as a tower of strength in every hour of danger and adversity. In its might they meekly bore the cross, and went forth at the appointed time bravely and joyfully to die.¹

Relation
to the
world and
civil so-
ciety.

As regarded the world at large, and particularly the heathen State under whose laws they lived, the position of the Martyr Church was, of course, one mainly of separation and silent protest. They meddled nothing with public affairs, mingled little in general society. Essentially they were a nation within the nation—in the world, but not of it. They who had no right even to exist² could have little interest or part in the affairs of that world from which they were outlaws and aliens. They existed everywhere, but everywhere they were strangers. They lived, as it were, under ground, and heard only as by distant rumour of what was going on in the bright upper realm in which they had no share. Ever did their Master's words seem to sound in their ears, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world;" and a still small voice to whisper within, "Arise and depart, for this is not your rest, for it is polluted." Yet here there were questions of great difficulty, on which even earnest Christians were more or less divided. There were some things which were in their very nature evil—part and parcel of that kingdom of darkness from which they had been redeemed. Others, again, were in themselves doubtful or indifferent, and might become occasions of sin only from accidental circumstances and associations. The one

¹ On this whole subject, consult Hagenbach and Neander, on the History of Doctrines; also an admirable paper on the "Views of the Early Christians on the Atonement," in the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, No. XXXV.

² Non licet esse vos, were words frequently on the lips of the heathen in regard to the proscribed sect.

were sinful in their very use; the other only in their abuse. Of the former kind were all idolatrous and immoral practices, and whatever was connected with or ministered to them; as shows, spectacles, heathen processions, theatrical entertainments. Of the latter, such public offices and employments under the heathen State as might seem to bring the Christian soldier into too close an alliance with the world that disowned him, and might become a snare to his soul. In regard to the former there was no question. Here the duty of the Christian was plain and imperative. The very idea of his Christian profession summoned him to a stern and uncompromising resistance. The Christian must have no fellowship with such "unfruitful works of darkness." Thus all makers of heathen idols and magical charms, stage-players and other ministers to the reigning licentiousness, were excluded from the Church, or, if continuing such practices after baptism, excommunicated from its fellowship. In regard to the other class, the case was different. Here the most enlightened and earnest Christians formed different judgments and followed different lines of action. Were those things which were in themselves lawful and right to be abandoned and given up to the devil, merely because he had perverted and defiled them? Or were they not rather, on that very account the more, to be redeemed and consecrated by holy use to God? Was the Christian soldier to abandon his post merely because it was assailed by the enemy? Or was he not rather to stand fast and defend it to the last? Was the sacred leaven to be separated from the corrupting mass, or was it to enter into its substance, and diffuse its transforming influence around? Was not the whole earth and the fulness thereof the Lord's? And was not the entire life of man, outward and inward, body and soul, a divine and sacred thing, to be sanctified to his service and glory? Were they, in short, to go out of the world, or were they, by

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God's grace and as in God's sight, to do their duty in the world? So reasoned in substance the one class, and, acting on these views, freely entered the ranks of the army, and accepted such civil offices and employments under the government as were not in their nature incompatible with their Christian calling. The other class, again, advocated the stricter course of action, on the general ground of nonconformity to the world, the duty of the Christian to come out and be separate, and the practical impossibility, as they deemed, of in such a position maintaining their Christian integrity and keeping their garments clean. As it was, a great proportion of the professing Church acted on the milder and freer view; while there were never wanting earnest voices to maintain the sterner principle, and denounce all such prudent accommodations to the existing order of things as an unhallowed alliance of righteousness with unrighteousness, of light with darkness.

In reference to the institutions and laws of social life generally, the tendency of the early Church was decidedly conservative. While it sought to make all things new, it ever wrought rather by moral influence than by active aggression. Its tendency was to renovate, not innovate,—to infuse a new and better life into the social system from within, rather than originate violent changes from without. In all the empire there were no such loyal subjects of the government—none who so conscientiously and cheerfully obeyed the laws, as they whom the government and the laws alike disowned. Even those giant evils of the old world, such as slavery and civil despotism, which were most opposed to the spirit of Christianity, she rather silently undermined than openly and directly assailed. She prepared the world for freedom by making men's souls free; and vindicated the true dignity and essential equality of all men in the sight of God, by revealing to all the sublime ideal of that eternal

kingdom where all merely outward and surface distinctions are unknown.

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Thus, then, the early Christians lived, mingling everywhere with the world, yet distinct from it, as its true preserving salt, and all-penetrating, all-pervading leaven. To use the vivid words of one of the most precious fragments of antiquity, the anonymous epistle to Diognetus:—

“The Christians are not distinguished from other men by country, by language, or by civil institutions; for they neither dwell in cities of their own, nor use a peculiar tongue, nor follow a singular mode of life. They dwell in the Grecian or barbarian cities, as the case may be; they follow the usage of the country in dress, food, and the other affairs of life. Yet they show a peculiarity of conduct wonderful and striking to all. They dwell in their own native land but as sojourners. They take part in all things as citizens, and they suffer all things as strangers. Every foreign country is a fatherland to them, and every fatherland is a foreign country. They marry, like all others, and beget children; but they do not expose their children. They live in the flesh, but not according to the flesh. They sojourn upon earth, but are citizens of heaven. They obey the existing laws, and yet raise themselves above the laws by their lives. They love all, and are persecuted by all. They are unknown, and yet they are condemned. They are killed, and are made alive. They are poor, and make many rich. They lack all things, and in all things abound. They are dishonoured, and amidst their dishonour are glorified. They are calumniated, and are justified. They are cursed, and they bless. They receive scorn, and they give honour. They do good, and are punished as evil doers. When punished, they rejoice as being made alive. By the Jews they are attacked as aliens, and by the Greeks persecuted; and the cause of the enmity their

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Church
and the
world.

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enemies cannot tell. In short, what the soul is in the body, that are Christians in the world. As the soul is diffused through all the members of the body, so are Christians diffused through all the cities of the world. The soul dwells in the body, but is not of the body; so Christians dwell in the world, but are not of the world. The invisible soul is inclosed in the visible body; so Christians are known to be in the world, but their piety is unseen. The flesh hates and wars against the soul though it does it no wrong, because it forbids the indulgence of its pleasures; and the world hates the Christians though they do it no wrong, because they resist *its* pleasures. The soul loves the flesh and its members that hate her; and so do Christians love them that hate them. The soul is inclosed in the body, and yet holds the body together; and Christians are detained in the world as in a prison, yet they hold the world together. The immortal soul dwells in a mortal tabernacle, and Christians dwell as sojourners in mortal things, expecting immortality in heaven. Such is the place which God hath assigned to them, and woe to them if they fly from it.”¹

¹ Χριστιανοὶ γὰρ οὔτε γῆ οὔτε φωνῇ οὔτε ἔθεσι δικεκριμένοι τῶν λοιπῶν εἰσὶν ἀνθρώπων· οὔτε γὰρ που πόλεις ἰδίας κατοικοῦσιν, οὔτε διαλέκτῳ τινὶ παρηλλαγμένῳ χρῶνται, οὔτε βίον παρασήμον ἀσχοῦσιν. οὐ μὴν ἐπινοῶ τινὲ καὶ φροντίδι πολυπραγμόνων ἀνθρώπων μάθημα τοῦτ' αὐτοῖς ἐστὶν εὐρημένον, οὐδὲ δόγματος ἀνθρωπίνου προεστᾶσιν ὡσπερ ἔθιοι. κατοικοῦντες δὲ πόλεις Ἑλληνίδας τε καὶ βαρβάρους ὡς ἕκαστος ἐκκληρώθη, καὶ τοῖς ἐγγχωρίοις ἔθεσιν ἀκολουθοῦντες ἐν τε ἐσθῆτι καὶ διαίτῃ καὶ τῷ λοιπῷ βίῳ, θαυμαστὴν καὶ ὁμολογουμένως παράδοξον ἐνδείκνυνται τὴν κατάστασιν τῆς αὐτῶν πολιτείας. Πατρίδας οἰκοῦσιν ἰδίας, ἀλλ' ὡς πάροικοι· μετέχουσι πάντων ὡς πολῖται, καὶ πάνθ' ὑπομένουσιν ὡς ξένοι· πᾶσα ξένη πατρίς ἐστὶν αὐτῶν, καὶ πᾶσα πατρίς ξένη. Γαμοῦσιν ὡς πάντες καὶ τεκνογονοῦσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ βίπτουσι τὰ γεννώμενα. τράπεζαν κοινὴν παρατίθενται, ἀλλ' οὐ κοίτην. ἐν σαρκὶ τυγχάνουσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ κατὰ σάρκα ξῶσιν. ἐπὶ γῆς διατρίβουσιν, ἀλλ' ἐν οὐρανῷ πολιτεύονται. πείθονται τοῖς ὠρισμένοις νόμοις καὶ τοῖς ἰδίοις βίοις νικῶσι τοὺς νόμους. ἀγνοοῦνται καὶ κατακρίνονται· θανατοῦνται καὶ ζωοποιοῦνται· πτωχεύουσι καὶ πλουτίζουσι πολλοὺς· πάντων ὑστεροῦνται, καὶ ἐν πᾶσι περισσέουσιν. ἀτιμῶνται, καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀτιμίαις δοξάζονται· βλασφημοῦνται, καὶ δικαιοῦνται· λοιδοροῦνται, καὶ ἐυλογοῦσιν·

These last words touch again the keynote of our present theme, and suggest the appropriate close to these brief sketches of Christian life in suffering times. We have followed the Martyr Church to the domestic hearth, to the closet, to the house of God, to the baptismal font, to the communion table, to the forum, to the camp; it is fitting now that we should follow her to the grave, and leave her there. It was there above all that she was indeed great; it was as the suffering Church—the Church victorious in sorrow and in death, that she has stamped her image indelibly on the history of that age, and bequeathed to after times a legacy of holy spirit-stirring memories which will endure to the world's end. Verily if those old Christians knew better than other men how to live, they knew still better how to die. Sustained by the blessed hope of an immortal life beyond the grave, they presented to men's eyes an image of chastened yet cheerful resignation, removed alike from stoical indifference and from passionate lamentations, which was as new as it was strange. With Christ they freely wept over the graves of those they loved, but cheered by Christ's love and Christ's victory,

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ὑβρίζονται, καὶ τιμῶσι. ἀγαθοποιούντες ὡς κακοὶ κολάζονται· κολαζόμενοι χαίρουσιν ὡς ζῶποιοῦμενοι. ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ὡς ἀλλόφυλοι πολεμοῦνται καὶ ὑπὸ Ἑλλήνων διώκονται· καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς ἔχθρας εἰπεῖν οἱ μισοῦντες οὐκ ἔχουσιν. ἀπλῶς δ' εἰπεῖν ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν σώματι ψυχῇ, τοῦτ' εἰσὶν ἐν κόσμῳ Χριστιανί. ἔσπαρται κατὰ πάντων τῶν τοῦ σώματος μελῶν ἢ ψυχῇ, καὶ Χριστιανοὶ κατὰ τὰς τοῦ κόσμου πύλεις. οἰκεῖ μὲν ἐν τῷ σώματι ψυχῇ, οὐκ ἔστι δὲ ἐκ τοῦ σώματος· καὶ Χριστιανοὶ ἐν κόσμῳ οἰκοῦσιν, οὐκ εἰσὶ δὲ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου. ἀθάνατος ἢ ψυχῇ ἐν ὄρατῷ φρουρεῖται τῷ σώματι· καὶ Χριστιανοὶ γινώσκονται μὲν ὄντες ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, ἀθάνατος δὲ αὐτῶν ἢ θεοσέβεια μένει. μισεῖ τὴν ψυχὴν ἢ σὰρξ καὶ πολεμεῖ μηδὲν ἀδικουμένη, διότι ταῖς ἡδοναῖς κωλύεται χρῆσθαι· μισεῖ καὶ Χριστιανὸς ὁ κόσμος μηδὲν ἀδικούμενος, ὅτι ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ἀντιτάσσονται. ἢ ψυχῇ τὴν μισοῦσαν ἀγαπᾷ σάρκα καὶ τὰ μέλη· καὶ Χριστιανοὶ τοὺς μισοῦντας ἀγαπῶσιν. ἐγκέλευσται μὲν ἢ ψυχῇ τῷ σώματι, συνέχει δὲ αὐτὴ τὸ σῶμα· καὶ Χριστιανοὶ κατέχονται μὲν ὡς ἐν φρουρᾷ τῷ κόσμῳ, αὐτοὶ δὲ συνέχουσι τὸν κόσμον. ἀθάνατος ἢ ψυχῇ ἐν θνητῷ σκηνώματι κατοικεῖ· καὶ Χριστιανοὶ παροικοῦσιν ἐν φθαρτοῖς, τὴν ἐν οὐρανοῖς ἀφθαρσίαν προσδεχόμενοι. κακουργουμένη σιτίοις καὶ ποτοῖς ἢ ψυχῇ βελτιοῦται· καὶ Χριστιανοὶ κολαζόμενοι καθ' ἡμέραν πλεονάζουσι μᾶλλον.—
E. p. ad Diog. §§ v. vi.

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they smiled through their tears. "You must not mourn," says Cyprian, in one of his sermons during the prevailing epidemic, "for those who are released from the world by the call of the Lord, when you know they are not lost, but sent before, that they may anticipate those that are left behind, as travellers or voyagers. We must indeed long after them, but not bewail them. We ought not, for their sakes, to put on black garments, since there they are already clothed in white."¹ Even the loathsome prison was often turned into a scene of holy gladness, while the brave confessors, calmly prepared to die, and pastors and brethren, regardless of all danger, flocked around them, to minister to their wants, to share with them their last communion, and to cheer them on to their final combat. Nor could death itself divide those, whom living no earthly barrier could keep apart. Death to them was but a holy sleep; their death-day was a birth-day into a better and immortal life. The burial of the just was but the "deposition" of the precious dust until Christ should come to wake it out of sleep. With a vividness of feeling which we can scarcely conceive, they realized the continued and indissoluble oneness of the militant and the triumphant Church. They habitually thought of their departed brethren as still present with them, and as in spirit sharing in their communions and their feasts of love. On the anniversaries of their death, which were kept as birthday feasts, their names were commemorated in the public prayers of the Church, and the communion was

¹ Nobis quoque ipsis minimis et extremis quoties revelatum est, quam frequenter atque manifeste de Dei dignatione præceptum est, ut contestarer assidue et publice prædicarem, fratres nostros non esse lugendos, accersitione dominica de sæculo liberatos, cum sciamus non eos amitti, sed præmitti, recedentes præcedere, ut proficiscentes, ut navigantes solent, desiderari eos debere, non plangi, nec accipiendas esse hic atras vestes, quando illi ibi indumenta alba jam sumserint, occasionem dandam non esse gentilibus, ut nos merito ac jure reprehendant, quod quos vivere apud Deum dicimus, ut extinctos et perditos lugeamus et fidem, quam sermone et voce deponimus, cordis et pectoris testimonio non probimus. Spei nostræ ac fidei prævaricatores sumus; simulata, ficta, fucata videntur esse, quæ dicimus. Nihil prodest verbis præferre virtutem et factis destruere veritatem.—*Cyp. De Mortalitate*, § 20.

celebrated in the vivid consciousness of the unseen presence of those who were only for a season hid from their bodily eyes. The birthdays of the martyrs were especially observed as days of high and solemn festival. Then the whole congregation assembled at their tombs; the eucharist was celebrated as if in presence alike of the militant and the triumphant Church; and the stirring recital of the martyr's good confession and victorious end fired the hearts of others to follow in their steps. In that bright picture there were doubtless dark shades. A carnal enthusiasm often mingled with the pure flame of Christian faith and hope. The mere act of martyrdom was confounded with that holy fidelity to truth and conscience of which in itself it was but the expression; and men rushed in a kind of fanatic frenzy to the stake, as if it had been a sure passport to glory, and an ample substitute for the fruits of a holy life. The baptism of blood in the apprehension of many took the place of the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost. The reverential affection too shown to the imprisoned confessors, sometimes degenerated, as we have already seen, into an extravagant and idolatrous adulation. Their blessing and their prayers were sought as the most precious of all boons, and their mere word of recommendation to the peace of the Church was held to restore the most scandalous offender to the privileges of communion. In fine, the commemoration of the martyrs easily degenerated into the worship of the martyrs, and gradually paved the way for that vast system of creature worship which, in an after age, ate into the very heart of the Church, and gradually substituted a Christianized polytheism for the simple and sublime adoration of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Against these abuses, however, the sounder portion of the Church steadily protested, and there have been few nobler words ever spoken than those in which even the ardent Tertullian denounced an evil which, so early as

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his day, had begun formidably to threaten the true life of the Church :—

“ Who is there without sin as long as he lives on earth and in the flesh? What martyr even, who, as long as he dwells on earth, has to beg for the denarius (xx. 2), is answerable to him who requires interest for the talents committed to him, and needs the physician? But suppose that the sword is already waving over his head—that he is already stretched on the rack—that he is already thrown to the lions—that he is surrounded by the flames—that he is already safe in the possession of martyrdom, who can authorize a man to give what belongs to God alone? It will be enough for a martyr to be purified from his own sin. It is ingratitude or pride to wish to extend to others what he can scarcely succeed in obtaining for himself. Who is there besides the Son of God who has paid the ransom of another’s death by his own? For in the very time of his passion he liberated the malefactor. For this very purpose he came, that being free from sin and perfectly holy, he might die for sinners. Hence, thou who wouldst imitate him in forgiving sins, suffer for me, *if* thou hast not sinned thyself. But if thou art a sinner, how can the oil in thy lamp suffice at once for me and for thyself?”¹

Conclu-
sion.

Such, then, was the Martyr Church, in her strength

¹ Quis enim in terris in et carne sine culpa? Quis martyr, seculi incola, denariis supplex, medico obnoxius et fœnatorum? Puta nunc sub gladio jam capiti librato, puta in patibulo jam corpore expanso, puta in stipite jam leone concesso, puta in axe jam incendio adstructo, in ipsa, dico, securitate et possessione martyrii; quis permittit homini donare, quæ Deo reservanda sunt, a quo ea sine executione damnata sunt, quæ nec apostoli, quod sciam, martyres et ipsi donabilia judicaverunt? Denique jam ad bestias depugnauerat Paulus Ephesi, cum interitum decernit incesto. Sufficiat martyri propria delicta purgasse. Ingrati vel superbi est in alios quoque spargere, quod pro magno fuerit consecutus. Quis alienam mortem sua solvit, nisi solus Dei Filius? Nam et in ipsa passione liberavit latronem. Ad hoc enim venerat, ut ipse a delicto purus et omnia sanctus pro peccatoribus obiret. Proinde qui illum æmularis donando delicta, si nil ipse deliquisti, plane patere pro me. Si vero peccator es, quomodo oleum faculæ tuæ sufficere et tibi et mihi poterit?—*Tert. De Pudicitia*, § 22.

and in her weakness, in her bright lights and dark shadows, as she fought, toiled, suffered, during those long ages of conflict and trial. Such as she was, she has long since passed away. That stately image of meek endurance, and calm, all-conquering charity, vanished from the earth with the circumstances which gave occasion to its display. The suffering Church became the triumphant Church, and other scenes opened before her, which awoke new energies and called for the manifestation of other virtues. The last blood shed in the Dioclesian persecution was in the year 311. Within a year afterwards, a course of events was in progress which suddenly changed the whole aspect of things within the Roman empire, and raised the curtain of a new future alike for the Church and for the world. A Christian emperor was on the throne. An edict of full toleration for all religions, and especially for the one true religion, was proclaimed. The persecuted people came forth from their hiding-places into the light of day; captives and exiles returned from the prisons and mines, and the highways resounded with the hymns of thanksgiving and of joy. The gloomy Catacomb was exchanged for the gorgeous Basilica; or, if those sacred haunts of former days were still fondly revisited, it was only as the honoured battle-fields of a combat already fought and won. The once hated Cross was now openly displayed as a badge of honour, and borne as an ensign of victory before the Roman legions.¹ Christian bishops thronged the royal ante-chambers, and were the most dignified and honoured personages in every city of the empire. The affairs of the Church were the common interest of the realm, and august assemblies were convened from the ends of the earth, under imperial sanction, to fix the constitution and proclaim the faith of a community which but

¹ *E.g.* the resplendent banner of the Cross, called the *Labarum*, which Constantine caused to be made according to a pattern he had seen in a dream—on the shaft of which was affixed, with the symbol of the Cross, the monogram of the name of Christ.

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yesterday had been denied even the right to exist. Thus, in her whole outward condition, "all old things had passed away, and all things had become new," and, as many a fond heart dreamed, "the kingdoms of this world were become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." Whether it was indeed so—whether and to what extent that sudden blaze of earthly favour contributed to the true strength and glory of the kingdom of God, the annals of the next succeeding age will disclose.

THE FAITH OF THE MARTYR CHURCH.

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and of earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of the Father before all worlds [God of God],² Light of Light, very God of very God, Begotten not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man, And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried, And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures, And ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father [and the Son],³ Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And we believe in one [holy],⁴ catholic, and apostolic Church, We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.⁵

¹ As declared at the first general Council at Nicæa, A.D. 325, and revised and enlarged by the addition of the Article on the Holy Ghost at the Council of Constantinople, A.D. 381. This Creed may be regarded, therefore, as embodying the faith of the Martyr Church, as it first found articulate expression at the close of the ages of persecution.

² These words are in the Creed as at first drawn up at Nicæa, but not in the revised Constantinopolitan form.

³ Added afterwards by the Western Church.

⁴ Omitted in Latin translation.

⁵ See the original texts both of the shorter (A.D. 325) and the larger form (A.D. 381) in Appendix: *The Nicene Creed*.

TABLE III.—CHRONOLOGICAL

ROMAN BISHOPS, &c.	LEADING EVENTS.
101. ALEXANDER. 107. XYSTUS. 107. SYMEON of Jerusalem, M.	100. Christianity is spread through almost all provinces of the Roman Empire,—in <i>Palestine, Syria, Parthia, Asia Minor, Illyria, Italy, Gaul.</i> 107. Persecutions.—SYMEON, M.
115. IGNATIUS of Antioch, M.	110. Official report of PLINY, governor of <i>Bithynia</i> , about the Christians, and reply of TRAJAN.—Christianity regarded as a <i>superstitio exitiabilis</i> , and revised law against <i>hæterie</i> applied against it.
118. TELESPHORUS.	120. Jewish Christians wholly separated from Christianized Jews (Ebionites and Nazarenes), which latter retained a separate existence till the fifth century.—EPICTETUS terms the Christians GALILÆANS.
129. HYGINUS.	125. PUBLIUS, Bp. <i>Athens</i> , M.
133. PIUS I.	130. VALENTINUS and CERDO at <i>Rome</i> . 132. MARCION at <i>Rome</i> .
151. ANICETUS, M.	138. MARCUS, first Gentile Bp. at <i>Ælia Capitolina</i> . 139. JUSTIN MARTYR'S "Apologies" published. "Shepherd of Hermas" probably written at this time.
163. SOTER. 163. PAPIAS of Hierapolis, ob.	160. Church at <i>Carthage</i> flourishing. TERTULLIAN born.
164. JUSTIN, M.	

SUMMARY OF THE SECOND PERIOD.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY	ROMAN EMPERORS.
	Trajan.
101. GETÆ subdued by TRAJAN.	
114. <i>Armenia Major</i> a Roman province.	
115. Earthquake at <i>Alexandria</i> .	
117. JEWISH revolt in <i>Asia Minor</i> and <i>Egypt</i> .	117. Hadrian
122-35. Rebellion in <i>Palestine</i> , under BAR-COCHBA.— <i>Jerusalem</i> reduced to a Roman colony, under the name of <i>Ælia Capitolina</i> .	
124. HADRIAN'S journey through Greece—addresses of ARISTIDES and QUADRATUS.	
	138. Antoninus Pius
148-80. Second migration of the German nations—SUEVI, GUADI, AUSTRO-GERMANNI, MARCOMANNI, VANDALS, ALANS, &c.—A league against Rome.—Wars under AURELIUS.	
	161. Marcus Aurelius.

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF

ROMAN BISHOPS, &c.	LEADING EVENTS.
167. POLYCARP of Smyrna, M.	167. Persecutions at <i>Smyrna</i> .—POLYCARP, M. 167. Montanistic movement in <i>Phrygia</i> .
172. ELEUTHERUS	170. First known use of the term CATHOLIC CHURCH, in an epistle from the Church of <i>Smyrna</i> to that of <i>Lyons</i> . PANTÆNUS in <i>Egypt</i> , and BARDESANES in <i>Edessa</i> .—According to the latter, Christianity is in <i>Parthia</i> , <i>Bactria</i> , <i>Media</i> , and <i>Persia</i> .
180. PANTÆNUS fl. HEGESIPPUS fl.	176? Story of King LUCIUS of <i>Britain</i> having sent for missionaries, to ELEUTHERUS, Bishop of <i>Rome</i> , and founding the see of <i>Llandaff</i> .—According to BEDE, in 156. 177. Persecutions at <i>Lyons</i> and <i>Vienne</i> .—POTHINUS, BLANDINA, &c., MM.
187. VICTOR I. 190. CAIUS, Presb. fl. POLYCRATES, Bp. Ephesus. SERAPION, Bp. of Antioch. DEMETRIUS, Bp. of Alexandria CLEMENT of Alexandria fl.	180-90. Christian Churches in <i>Germany</i> , <i>Iberia</i> , <i>Gaul</i> , <i>Lybia</i> , &c.—Christianity in <i>Upper Egypt</i> . MONTANISM gains head, and increases the public alarm at Christianity, as being politically dangerous.
193-4. THEODOTUS and NOETUS'	185. ORIGEN born. 190. CLEMENT succeeds PANTÆNUS, who goes to <i>India</i> .
199. ZEPHYRINUS TERTULLIAN fl. MINUCIUS FELIX	192. Paschal controversy.
	200. Christianity already diffused through the whole Roman Empire, beyond its boundaries in <i>Asia</i> , and carried into the north of <i>Europe</i> , through the irruptions of the German tribes into the empire.—After COMMODUS it has freer access to the Roman court.—Before this time there were Christian kings at <i>Edessa</i> , and Christian Churches in <i>Parthia</i> , <i>Persia</i> , and <i>India</i> .

THE SECOND PERIOD—*continued.*

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.	ROMAN EMPERORS.
<p>168. The CHATTI in <i>Gaul</i>. 170. The invasion of <i>Illyria</i>.</p>	
<p>180. The Roman garrisons beyond the <i>Danube</i> withdrawn.—Great military confederation of the Barbarians against <i>Rome</i>.—GOTHS pass from the <i>Vistula</i> to <i>Dacia</i> and the shores of the <i>Black Sea</i>; the VANDALS, in various tribes, along the <i>Danube</i>.</p>	<p>180. Commodus.</p> <p>.</p> <p>193. Pertinax, Didius Julianus.</p> <p>194. Septimius Severus.</p>
<p>197. Victory in <i>Parthia</i>, under SEP. SEVERUS.</p>	

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF

ROMAN BISHOPS, &c.	LEADING EVENTS.
203. ORIGEN, Catechist at Alexandria, ob. 254.	<p>202. IRENÆUS died. Persecutions under SEP. SEVERUS.—LEONIDAS, POTAMIÆNA, &c., MM. TERTULLIAN becomes Montanist.</p> <p>203. ORIGEN begins his public labours in the Catechetical school.</p> <p>210. ORIGEN preaches and teaches in <i>Arabia</i>.</p> <p>211-17. Persecutions under CARACALLA.—PERPETUA and FELICITAS, MM., at <i>Carthage</i>. In <i>Mesopotamia</i>, churches at <i>Amida</i> and <i>Nisibis</i>. ORIGEN at <i>Rome</i>.</p>
219. CALLISTUS. HYPPOLYTUS fl.	PRAXEAS and CLEOMENES at <i>Rome</i> .
223. URBAN I.	<p>228. ORIGEN ordained priest at <i>Cæsarea</i>; expelled by DEMETRIUS.</p> <p>230-40. Christian prisoners spread Christianity among the Barbarians.</p>
231. PONTIANUS. 232. JULIUS AFRICANUS ob.	231-2. ORIGEN condemned.
236. ANTEROS.	235. HIPPOLYTUS and PONTIANUS banished to <i>Sardinia</i> .
237. FABIANUS, M.	236. Martyrdom of PONTIANUS—about the same time of HIPPOLYTUS.
	240-50. Persecutions by the populace in <i>Alexandria</i> .

THE SECOND PERIOD—*continued.*

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.	ROMAN EMPERORS.
<p>207. CALEDONIAN invasion of <i>Britain</i> repelled by SEVERUS.—Wall between the <i>Forth</i> and the <i>Clyde</i>, 208.</p> <p>Movements and struggles of the German tribes. <i>Judæa</i> almost deserted. Their religious worship and rabbinical learning preserved in the schools of <i>Tiberias</i> and <i>Babylon</i>.</p> <p>DYNASTY of SASSANIDES, in <i>Persia</i>, founded by ARTAXERXES (226–41), flourished for 400 years, in constant conflict with <i>Rome</i>.</p>	<p>211. Caracalla.</p> <p>217. Macrinus. 218. Heliogabalus.</p> <p>222. Alexander Severus.</p>
<p>236. The GOTHs exact tribute of the Romans.—Defeated by GORDIAN, but still remain on the <i>Danube</i> (242). Internal commotion among the TARTAR tribes, especially the HUNS.</p>	<p>235. Maximinus Thrax.</p> <p>237–8. The Gordiani, I. and II.; Pupienus and Balbinus. 238 Gordianus III. 244. Philip the Arabian.</p>

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF

ROMAN BISHOPS, &c.	LEADING EVENTS.
247. DIONYSIUS the GREAT, Bp. of Alexandria.	247. About this time ORIGEN'S work against CELSUS.
248. CYPRIAN, Bp. of Carthage. <i>Vacancy of sixteen months.</i>	
250. SABELLIUS fl.	250. Christianity diffused in <i>Mauritania</i> and <i>Nu-midia</i> .—DIONYSIUS of <i>Alexandria</i> preaches in <i>Lybia</i> .
251. CORNELIUS. NOVATIAN, rival Bp.	250-51. DECIAN persecution.
252. LUCIUS, M.	
253. STEPHEN, M.	254-9. VALERIAN persecution.—STEPHEN, Bp. of <i>Rome</i> (257), and CYPRIAN, Bp. of <i>Carthage</i> (258), MM.; also SIXTUS II. of <i>Rome</i> (258).—About this time Christianity makes rapid progress in <i>Gaul</i> .—GREGORY of <i>Tours</i> , in his <i>History of France</i> (590), says, "Seven bishops sent to preach in time of Decius."—In <i>Spain</i> , Churches at <i>Leon</i> , <i>Saragossa</i> , and <i>Elvira</i> . In <i>Gaul</i> , at <i>Toulouse</i> , <i>Narbonne</i> , and <i>Arles</i> . In <i>Germany</i> , at <i>Treves</i> , <i>Metz</i> , and <i>Cologne</i> .
258. SIXTUS II., M.	254. Death of ORIGEN.
259. DIONYSIUS.	
265. PAUL of Samosata, Bp. of Antioch, fl.	
269. FELIX I. FERMILLIAN, Bp. of <i>Cæsarea</i> , in <i>Cappadocia</i> , ob.	

THE SECOND PERIOD—*continued.*

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.	ROMAN EMPERORS.
248. <i>Ludi seculares</i> at Rome.	
250-75. Military despotism triumphant in <i>Roman Empire</i> .	249. Decius.
	251. Gallus.
	253. Æmilianus. 254. Valerian.
257. Emperor AURELIAN taken prisoner by SATOR I. of <i>Persia</i> , in the mountainous districts between <i>Siberia</i> , <i>China</i> , and <i>India</i> .	
260. The time of the Thirty Tyrants.—The GERMANS in <i>Ravenna</i> .—The PERSIANS hold <i>Asia Minor</i> .—The SASSANIDES lay claim to all the Asiatic provinces of <i>Rome</i> . The SLAVONIANS (of <i>Scythian</i> and <i>Sarmatian</i> origin) cross the Carpathian mountains, and penetrate into <i>Hungary</i> .	259. Gallienus.
267. ZENOBIAN becomes queen of <i>Palmyra</i> and the East on the murder of ODENATUS; conquers <i>Egypt</i> , 269; is defeated and imprisoned by the Emperor AURELIAN, 273.	269. Claudius.

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF

ROMAN BISHOPS, &c.	LEADING EVENTS.
<p>270. GREGORY (Thaumaturgus), Bp. of Neo Cæsarea, ob.</p> <p>275. EUTYCHIANUS.</p> <p>280. METHODIUS, Bp. of Tyre.</p> <p>280. CYRILLUS, Bp. of Antioch.</p> <p>283. CAIUS.</p>	<p>During forty years of general toleration Christianity made great progress. It was openly professed by large numbers of persons in all ranks of life. Christians were appointed to the government of provinces, and were excused from assisting at heathen sacrifices.</p>
<p>296. DIONYSIUS of Paris, M.</p>	<p>286. Legend of the massacre of the THEBAN legion by MAXIMIANUS HERCULIUS—ST. MAURICE and 6600 THEBAN soldiers in <i>Switzerland</i>.</p>

THE SECOND PERIOD—*continued.*

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.	ROMAN EMPERORS.
<p>270-7. ALEMANNI invade <i>Italy</i>. — ALEMANNI and Burgundians defeated by PROBUS, 277. — A GOTHIC MONARCHY on the banks of the <i>Lower Danube</i>, and the north of the <i>Black Sea</i>. — The ALANI in <i>Cilicia</i>.</p>	<p>270. Aurelian.</p>
<p>277. Naval expedition of the THRACIAN FRANKS in the <i>Mediterranean</i> and <i>North Sea</i>. MANES, founder of the Manichees, executed by SAPOR, king of <i>Persia</i>.</p>	<p>275. Tacitus. 276. Probus.</p>
<p>280. THURINGIANS of Gothic origin, become known.</p>	<p>282. Caius.</p>
	<p>284. Dioclesian. Maximian Associated from 285.— On account of feuds and wars with the Bar- barians, the empire is put under four rulers — two Augusti and two Cæsars:— EAST.</p>
	<p>285. { Dioclesian.</p>
	<p>{ Galerius.</p>
	<p>305. { Galerius.</p>
	<p>{ Maximinus.</p>
	<p>WEST.</p>
	<p>{ Maximini-</p>
	<p>285. { anus.</p>
	<p>{ Constantius</p>
	<p>{ Chlorus.</p>
<p>288-93. Rebellion in <i>Britain</i>, under CARAUSIUS.</p>	

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF

ROMAN BISHOPS, &c.	LEADING EVENTS.
290. DOROTHEUS of Antioch, ob. LUCIAN, ob. 311.	292. School of <i>Antioch</i> founded.
296. MARCELLIN- US, M. 304. PAMPHILUS of Cæsarea, fl. ; died a M. in 309.	296. Edict of the proconsul of <i>Africa</i> against the MANICHEES (Magi).
AMOLIUS fl.	300. The Roman Empire more and more pene- trated by Christianity, and the political im- portance of Christians increased.
LACTANTIUS fl.	302. Christianity spread in ARMENIA, through GRE- GORY, the <i>Illuminator</i> .
303. VICTORINUS, Bp. of Petavium.	303-13. The DIOCLESIAN persecution.
<i>Vacancy of three and a half years.</i>	305. Christianity in <i>Augsburg</i> and <i>Treves</i> .
307. MARCELLUS.	
310. EUSEBIUS.	310. SAPOR II. of <i>Persia</i> persecutes Christians.
311. MELCHIADES	312. Edict of Constantine and Licinius, for uni- versal toleration.
	313. Edict of Milan, in favour of Christians, valid through the whole Roman Empire.
314. SYLVESTER.*	
* It will be observed that the Bishops of Rome are distinguished from the other names in this column by a diffe- rence of type.	

THE SECOND PERIOD—*continued.*

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.	ROMAN EMPERORS.
290. BURGUNDIANS defeated by the GOTHs.	
300. SAXONS between the <i>Rhine</i> and the <i>Elbe</i> league with the JUTES and ANGLES ; constant war with the Romans ; afterwards invade <i>Britain</i> .	
306. CONSTANTINE defeats the Franks in <i>Gaul</i> . HUNS traverse <i>Asia</i> , and give the impulse to the greatest irruption of the Barbaric races.	306. Constantine. Licinius.
	323. CONSTANTINE (alone).

TABLE IV.

BISHOPS OF JERUSALEM, ANTIOCH, ROME,* AND ALEXANDRIA,
TO THE YEAR 325.

APPEN-
DIX.

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| <p>46. (cir.) Evodius, Antioch.</p> <p>62. <i>Symeon, Jerusalem.</i>
Annianus, Alexandria.</p> <p>67. LINUS, BISHOP OF ROME ;
perhaps appointed by St. Paul and
St. Peter.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>N.B.</i>—The succession of the early
bishops of Rome is involved
in great obscurity and con-
tradiction.</p> <p>68. ANENCLETUS, ROME.</p> <p>70. Ignatius, Antioch.</p> <p>82. Abilius, Alexandria.</p> <p>93. (al. 91.) CLEMENT, ROME.</p> <p>97. Cerdo, Alexandria.</p> <p>100. EVARESTUS, ROME.</p> <p>104. <i>Justus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>107. Hero, Antioch.
ALEXANDER, ROME.
Primus, Alexandria.</p> <p>112. <i>Zacchæus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>114. <i>Tobias, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>116. (al. 119.) XYSTUS or SIXTUS,
ROME.</p> <p>116. <i>Benjamin, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>120. <i>Matthias, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>120. Justus, Alexandria.</p> <p>122. <i>Philip, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>125. <i>Seneca, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>126. <i>Justus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>128. <i>Levi, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>128. TELESOPHORUS, ROME.</p> <p>129. Cornelius, Antioch.</p> <p>130. <i>Ephrem, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>131. Emmenes, Alexandria.</p> <p>132. <i>Joseph, Jerusalem.</i></p> | <p>133. <i>Judas, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>135. <i>Marcus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>138. HYGINUS, ROME.</p> <p>141. Heros, Antioch.</p> <p>142. PIUS, ROME.</p> <p>143. Marcus, Alexandria.</p> <p>153. Celadion, Alexandria.</p> <p>156. ANICETUS, ROME.</p> <p>161. <i>Cassianus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>163. <i>Publius, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>166. <i>Maximianus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>168. <i>Julianus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>168. Theophilus, Antioch.</p> <p>168. SOTER, ROME.</p> <p>168. Agrippinus, Alexandria.</p> <p>171. <i>Caius, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>173. <i>Symmachus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>173. ELEUTHERUS, ROME.</p> <p>176. <i>Caius, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>179. <i>Julianus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>181. <i>Apion, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>181. Maximinus, Antioch.</p> <p>181. Julianus, Alexandria.</p> <p>184. <i>Maximus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>187. <i>Antonius, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>188. Demetrius, Alexandria.</p> <p>189. Serapion, Antioch.</p> <p>189. (al. 185.) VICTOR I., ROME.</p> <p>190. <i>Valens, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>193. <i>Dulichianus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>196. <i>Narcissus, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>201. ZEPHYRINUS, ROME.</p> <p>202. <i>Dius, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>205. <i>Germanio, Jerusalem.</i></p> <p>208. <i>Gordianus, Jerusalem.</i></p> |
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* The Roman bishops are here given according to the usual reckoning, which differs somewhat from that which we have adopted in the preceding table.

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| <p>211. Asclepiades, Antioch.
 214. <i>Alexander, Jerusalem.</i>
 217. Philetus, Antioch.
 218. CALLISTUS, ROME.
 222. URBANUS, ROME.
 229. Zebinus, Antioch.
 230. PONTIANUS, ROME.
 232. Heraclas, Alexandria.
 238. ANTEROS, }
 FABIANUS, } ROME.
 239. Babybas, Antioch.
 247. Dionysius, Alexandria.
 250. Fabius, Antioch.
 251. CORNELIUS, ROME.
 252. LUCIUS, ROME.
 252. Demetrianus, Antioch.
 253. STEPHEN, ROME.
 257. SIXTUS II., ROME.
 259. DIONYSIUS, ROME.
 260. Paul, Antioch.
 264. <i>Hymenæus, Jerusalem.</i>
 265. Maximus, Alexandria.
 269. FELIX, ROME.</p> | <p>269. Domnus, Antioch.
 274. EUTYCHIANUS, ROME.
 276. Timæus, Antioch.
 281. Cyril, Antioch.
 282. Theonas, Alexandria.
 283. CAIUS, ROME.
 297. <i>Zabdas, Jerusalem.</i>
 299. Tyrannus, Antioch.
 299. <i>Hermon, Jerusalem.</i>
 300. Peter, Alexandria.
 304. MARCELLINUS, ROME.
 (See of Rome vacant.)
 308. MARCELLUS, ROME.
 310. EUSEBIUS, }
 MELCHIADES, } ROME.
 311. Peter, Alexandria.
 312. Achilles, }
 Alexander, } Alexandria.
 313. MELCHIADES, ROME.
 314. SILVESTER, ROME.
 314. (ALEXANDER, BYZANT-
 IUM.)
 326. Athanasius, Alexandria.</p> |
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TABLE V.

COUNCILS BEFORE THE YEAR 325.

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| <p>Councils in Asia Minor and Thrace, against the Montanists and other false teachers, between 150 and 173.
 (Euseb. H. E. v. 16.)
 (Provincial) Councils in various parts of Christendom, concerning the time of celebrating Easter, between 196 and 199.
 Before the end of this century, the practice of assembling annual Councils</p> | <p>had been adopted in Asia Minor.
 215. Carthage; against baptism by heretics.
 230. Alexandria.
 231. Iconium.
 240. Carthage.
 242. Bostra, in Arabia; concerning Beryllus.
 245. Ephesus; against Noetus.
 251. Carthage; against Felicissimus, and concerning the lapsed.
 251. Rome; against Novatian.</p> |
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APPEN- DIX. <hr style="width: 50px; margin-left: 0;"/>	252. Carthage; infant baptism, and baptism by heretics. 252. Antioch; against Novatian. 253. Carthage; baptism of infants. 254. Carthage. 255. Carthage; baptism by heretics. 256. Carthage; baptism by heretics. 256. Rome; against the decisions of Carthage. 258. Rome; against the doctrines of Noetus. 260. Rome; under Dionysius—concerning Dionysius of Alexandria. 265. Antioch; against Paul of Samosata. 269. Antioch; Paul deposed.	305. (al. 313, 324.) Illiberis (Elvira); on discipline. 305. Cirta, in Numidia. 312. Carthage; Cæcilian deposed by the Donatists. 313. Rome; against the Donatists. 314. Arles; against the Donatists. 315. (al. 314, 318.) Ancyra; concerning the lapsed. 315. Neocæsarea; on discipline. 321. Alexandria; Arius excommunicated. 321. (Other Councils, in Bithynia and Palestine, in favour of Arius.) 324. Alexandria; against Arians and Colluthians.
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GENERAL COUNCILS.

- I. NICÆA325.....Against Arius.
 II. Constantinople.....381.....Against Macedonius.
 III. Ephesus.....431.....Against Pelagius and Nestorius.
 IV. Chalcedon.....451.....Against Eutychian and Nestorian errors.

APPENDIX.

Collectanea Historico-Theologica.

A P P E N D I X.

I.

ST. PETER AT ROME.

OF a residence of Peter in Rome the New Testament contains no certain trace, unless, as the Church fathers and many of the best modern expositors think, Rome is intended by the Babylon mentioned in 1 Pet. v. 13. The entire silence of the Acts of the Apostles (chap. xxviii.), respecting Peter, of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, and the epistles written by that apostle from Rome during his imprisonment there, in which Peter is not once named in the salutations, is decisive proof that Peter was not in that city during most of the time between the years 57 and 63. But the uniform tradition of the Eastern and Western Churches is, that he preached the gospel in Rome, and suffered martyrdom there in the Neronian persecution (A.D. 64; according to others, 67 or 68). So say Ignatius of Antioch, Dionysius of Corinth, Irenæus of Lyons, Caius of Rome, in the second century; Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Hippolytus, Tertullian, in the third; Lactantius, Eusebius, Jerome, and others in the fourth. However these testimonies from various men and countries may differ in particular circumstances, they can only be accounted for on the supposition of some fact at the bottom; for they were previous to any use or abuse of this tradition for hierarchical purposes. But the time of Peter's arrival in Rome, and the length of his residence there, cannot possibly be ascertained. The above-mentioned dates of the Acts and of Paul's epistles allow him only a short period of labour there; and the subsequent statement of Eusebius and Jerome respecting a twenty or twenty-five years' episcopate of Peter in Rome, rests unquestionably on a great chronological mistake.—*Schaff*.

APPEN-
DIX.

II.

HERETICS OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

APPEN-
DIX.

IN proportion as the fall of their commonwealth had rendered the Jews impotent, their opposition to the gospel increased. They now sought safety against the advances of Christianity in fettering all inquiry by traditionary interpretations and human ordinances. This mental direction was fostered by the schools of Tiberias and Babylon. The *Talmud*, of which the first portion was compiled at that period, represents the Antichristian tendency of Judaism, after it had fallen from its highest stage of development and become ossified as Traditionalism.—Some of the *followers of John* (Acts xviii. 24, &c.) also opposed Christianity, and, under the name of *Hemerobaptists*, formed a separate sect. The Christians who presently in Persia bear that name, and are also called *Sabæans* or *Mandæans*, are probably the successors of that sect, which in course of time had admitted Gnostic elements. While the first labours of the apostles were crowned with such eminent success, the Samaritans endeavoured to outstrip Christianity by introducing new forms of religion. *Dositheus*, *Simon Magus*, and *Menander*, whom the fathers designate as Heresiarchs, disguised their Samaritan Judaism under heathen and theosophic Gnosticism and Goetic impostures, while each of them claimed to be the Messiah.

1. DOSITHEUS pretended to be the Messiah promised in Deut. xviii. 18. He insisted on most rigorous Sabbath observance, and is said to have at last miserably perished in a cave, in consequence of boasted achievements in fasting.

2. SIMON MAGUS came from Gitton, in Samaria. He gave himself out to be the *δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη μεγάλη*,—was baptized by Philip, and solemnly warned and reproved by Peter, from whom he wished to purchase the power of giving the Holy Ghost. Afterwards he purchased, in a brothel at Tyre, *Helena*, a slave, to whom he assigned the part of the *Ἐννοία* who had created the world. In order to deliver *her* (who was held captive by the lower angels), and *with her* the world

held in bondage by these angels, he, the Supreme God, had come into the world in the form of a man, but without being really a man. He had, in appearance, suffered in Judea, and manifested himself to the Jews as the Son, to the Samaritans as the Father, and to the Gentiles as the Holy Ghost. According to his teaching, salvation only depended on acknowledging him and his Helena as supreme gods; only *his* mercy, not good works, could save a man. The law had originated with the fallen angels, and was introduced for the sole purpose of reducing men to bondage. *The followers of Simon* developed the Gnostic system of their master, and gave themselves up to the utmost licentiousness. Irenæus speaks of Simon as the “magister ac progenitor omnium hæreticorum,”—and, in point of fact, his views embody the fundamental ideas of every later form of Gnosticism. Justin Martyr even imagined that he had seen at Rome a statue, bearing the inscription, “Simoni sancto deo,”—a mistake this, removed by the excavation of a statue dedicated to the Sabinian god *Semo Sancus*. Of his discussion with Peter at Rome, we read only in the Clementines; of his projected ascension to heaven, in which he perished in the sea, in the Apostolic Constitutions.

3. MENANDER was at first a disciple of Simon, but afterwards preferred himself also to play the part of a Messiah. However, he remained sufficiently modest not to claim the honours of supreme deity, and only pretended that he was the Saviour whom God had sent. He taught that whosoever received his baptism should neither grow old nor die.—*Kurtz*.

III.

GNOSTIC SECTS AND TEACHERS.

OF almost greater danger to the Church than even the direct hostility and persecution of Jews and pagans, were certain Jewish and heathen elements imported into the Christian community. The unspiritual, unbending, and narrow formalism of the one, and the ungodly, antichristian tendency of the other, not only reappeared, but claimed equal standing with what really and distinctively was Christian. The attempt to force Christianity into the

narrow-minded particularism of the Synagogue produced *Ebionism*; the desire to amalgamate with Christianity Grecian and Oriental theosophy introduced *Gnosticism*. These two directions were also combined into a *Gnostic Ebionism*,—a system for which the doctrines of the Essenes served as point of transition and connecting link. The Church had to put forth all its energies in order to defend itself against this dangerous admixture of other creeds, and to clear its soil from weeds which spread so rapidly. What of Antichristian Judaism had intruded was speedily overcome and cast out. But much more difficult was the contest with Gnosticism; and although the Church ultimately succeeded in uprooting on its own soil these weeds, many of their seeds were for centuries secretly preserved, and sometimes of a sudden sprang up into fresh crops. However, these contests also brought blessings to the Church: from them it issued with views more enlarged and liberal, with the deep conviction that scientific culture was necessary for its theology, and prepared by victory for new struggles.

GNOSTICISM must ultimately be traced to a peculiar and powerful tendency inherent in many minds during the first centuries. A deep conviction that the old world had run its course, and was no longer able to resist the dissolution which threatened it, pervaded the age. It also impelled many, by a syncretism the boldest and grandest that history has recorded,—we mean, by the amalgamation of the various elements of culture, which hitherto had been isolated and heterogeneous,—to make a last attempt at renovating what had become antiquated. While under one aspect this tendency was intended to *oppose* Christianity (by Neo-Platonism), under another the Church itself was drawn into the vortex, and by an amalgamation of Oriental theosophy, of Grecian theosophy, and of Christian ideas, a widely ramified system of most extravagant religious philosophy came forth from the crucible of this peculiar kind of speculation. This system bore the general name of *Gnosticism*. Various sects of Gnostics viewed *the Scriptures* in a different manner. Some, by means of allegorical interpretations, sought to base their system on the Bible. Others preferred to decry the apostles as having falsified the original Gnostic teaching of Christ, to attempt recasting the apostolic writings in accordance with their own views, or by Gnostic spurious writings to

make up a Bible after their own fashion. The teaching of primitive sages, handed down by tradition as secret doctrine, they placed above Sacred Writ.—*Gnostic speculation busied itself with such questions as the origin of the world and of evil, or the purpose, means, and goal of the development of the world.* To solve these problems the Gnostics borrowed from heathenism its theory about the origin of the world, and from Christianity the idea of salvation. All Gnostic systems are based on a kind of *Dualism* of God and of Matter (ἔλη). Only that some, with the Platonists, regarded matter as *unreal* (having no real existence) and without form (= μὴ ὄν), hence as not directly hostile and opposed to the Deity; while others, in accordance with the views of the Parsees, supposed it to be animated and ruled by an evil principle, and hence to be directly opposed and hostile to the Good Deity. The theogonic and cosmogonic process was explained on the principle of an *emanation* (προβολή), by which from the hidden God a long series of Divine formations (αἰῶνες) had emanated, whose indwelling Divine potency diminished in measure as they removed from the original Divine Source. These Æons are represented as being the media of the creation, development and redemption of the world. The original matter from which the world was created consisted of a mixture of elements, derived partly from the kingdom of light (the πλήρωμα), and partly from the Hyle (ὑστέρημα, κένωμα). This mixture was differently represented as brought about naturally, by the fall or by a contest. The *world was created* by one of the lowest and weakest Æons, called the δημιουργός. Creation is the preparation and the commencement of *redemption*. But as the Demiurgos cannot and will not accomplish the latter, one of the highest Æons appears in the fulness of time as Redeemer, in order to accomplish the deliverance of the captive elements of light by the imparting of γνῶσις. As matter is in itself evil, the (*pneumatic*) Saviour had only an *apparent body*, or else at baptism descended into the psychical Messiah, whom the Demiurgos had sent. The death on the cross was either only an optical delusion, or the heavenly Christ had left the man Jesus and returned to the Pleroma, or else he had given his form to another person (Simon of Cyrene), so that the latter was crucified instead of Jesus (Docetism). According as the pleromatic or the hylie element prevails, the souls of men are naturally either *pneumatic*, and in

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that case capable of *γνώσις*; *psychic*, when they cannot attain beyond *πίστις*; or *hylic*,—the latter class comprising the great mass of men who, left in hopeless subjection to the powers of Satan, only follow their own lusts. *Salvation* consists in overcoming and eliminating matter, and is accomplished through knowledge (*γνώσις*) and asceticism. As it was believed that matter was the seat of evil, *sanctification* was sought physically rather than ethically, and thought to consist in resisting matter and abstaining from material enjoyments. Hence originally the system implied an exceedingly strict code of morals, but, in point of fact, frequently became the very opposite, and degenerated into Antinomianism and Libertinism. This is partly explained from the low views entertained by some about the law of the Demiurgos, and partly by the not uncommon occurrence of a sect passing from one extreme to another.

EBIONISM AND EBIONITE GNOSIS.

Those Jewish Christians who, after the destruction of Jerusalem, continued in ecclesiastical separation from their Gentile brethren, either formed a separate sect or fell into open heresy. The former bore the name of *Nazarenes*, the latter that of *Ebionites*. These designations, however, were at first not exclusively applied to each of these parties, and their distinctive use dates from a later period. In the sect of the *Elkesaites* or *Sampseans*, we perceive that Gnostic elements had found their way among the Ebionites also, probably from their connection with the Essenes and Therapeutæ. In the system embodied in the *Pseudo-Clementines*, this Ebionite Gnosis was extended and developed. It now assumed an attitude of direct antagonism to Gentile Gnosticism and to Gentile Catholicism, laying claim to represent genuine ancient Judaism, which was said to be quite the same as genuine Christianity.

1. The NAZARENES—a name by which the Jews had originally designated all Christians (Acts xxiv. 5)—held *themselves* bound still to observe the ceremonial law, without, however, disputing the salvation of Gentile Christians who abstained from its injunctions. They believed in the divinity of Christ's nature, acknowledged Paul as being a true apostle, and rejected the ordinances of the Rabbins, but cherished a carnal kind of Chiliasm (that is, they expected a thousand years' reign of Christ on earth, after a

fashion similar to that which formed the main features of Jewish ideas of the Messiah). The so-called Gospel of the Hebrews, an interpolated edition of the Gospel of Matthew, served as the basis of their views.

2. The EBIONITES deemed observance of the ceremonial law indispensably necessary for salvation. They regarded, indeed, Christ as the Messiah, but held him to have been only a man (the son of Joseph), whom, at his baptism, God had endowed with supernatural powers. His Messianic activity they limited to his teaching, by which he had enlarged and perfected the law, adding to it new and more strict commandments. The death of Christ was an offence to them, under which they consoled themselves with the promise of his return, when they expected that a terrestrial kingdom should be set up.—The Apostle Paul, in their opinion, was a heretic, and deserved obloquy. They also had a gospel of their own.

3. The Fathers derived the designation ELKESAITES from *Elxai*, the founder of that sect,—a name which, according to their interpretation, meant *δύναμις κεκαλυμμένη* (חַיִל נִסְתָּר). But there is probably some misunderstanding about this statement. The sect rather appealed to the Holy Ghost (חַיִל נִסְתָּר) as their teacher, and possessed a book for the initiated, which bore the same title. Their doctrines were a mixture of Essene, Jewish, heathen, naturalistic, and Christian elements. The law—especially that of the Sabbath and of circumcision—was held to be binding; but they rejected sacrifices. They practised frequent ablutions, both for the forgiveness of sins and for the cure of diseases; in the Lord's Supper bread and salt were used. The use of flesh was forbidden, but marriage was allowed. Christ was regarded as being the Son of God by the Virgin.—Next to him they placed the Πνεῦμα ἄγιον in the form of a female figure. The Elkesaites inhabited the eastern shores of the Dead Sea. According to Epiphanius, they were the same as the Sampseans = Ἡλιακοί.

4. The PSEUDO-CLEMENTINE SYSTEM originated in the latter half of the second century. It was derived from a didactic work of fiction, which, however, claims to be regarded as a true story. *Clemens Romanus*, a noble Roman, philosophically educated, had, from a desire after information, travelled to the East, where he met with Peter, and became the companion of his missionary

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journeys. The peculiar *doctrinal* views of the work are gathered from the sermons and the discussions of Peter; the *historical romance* is elaborated in the scenes of recognition and conversion of the father, the mother, and the brothers of Clement. *Peter* is brought forward as the representative of what is alleged to have been genuine and original Christianity; *Simon Magus*, his antagonist, represents every form of supposed spurious Christianity, from his own teaching and that of his adherents to that of the Apostle *Paul*, according to whom the law was abolished in Christ, and that of *Marcion*, according to whom the Creator of the world was not the Supreme God. The alleged motive for the composition of the book is this,—that Peter, the founder and first bishop of the Church at Rome, had, shortly before his death, appointed Clement his successor, and enjoined him to intimate this to *James* in Jerusalem, as the head of the Church, so as to obtain his acknowledgment.—The Pseudo-Clementine romance is preserved in various modifications. The two oldest forms of it are—1. The *Homiliae* XX. Clementis (the first complete ed. by M. Dressel. Göttg. 1853), in Greek; and 2. The *Recognitiones* Clementis, in a Latin translation by Rufinus, in which the historical and romantic element is further carried out, while the doctrinal part is less full and somewhat expurgated. *Schliemann* regarded the *Recognitiones* as a later revisal of the *Homilies*; *Hilgenfeld* arrived at an opposite conclusion; *Uhlhorn* modifies the statement of *Schliemann*, and supposed that the *Homilies* themselves were recast after some original work, and that both the latter and the *Homilies* had been used in the composition of the *Recognitiones*.—The *System of the Clementine Homilies* is based on Stoic Pantheism combined with Jewish Theism, and proceeds on the supposition that genuine Christianity was exactly identical with genuine Judaism. The author discovers some elements of truth, and others of error, in all the principal modifications of Christian, of Jewish, and of heretical religion. He *controverts* the popular belief and the philosophy of the heathen, the sacrificial worship of the Jews, the Chiliasm of the Ebionites, the ecstatic prophetism of the Montanists, the hypostatic Trinitarianism of the Catholics, the Demiurgos, the Docetism, and the Antinomianism of the Gnostics. From the Ebionite system he *adopts* his idea of the identity of Judaism with Christianity; with the Essenes, he agrees in insist-

ing on abstinence from meats, frequent fasts, ablutions, and voluntary poverty (but he recommends early marriages); with the Catholics, as to the necessity of baptism for the forgiveness of sins, &c. According to this writer, *God* is pure existence (*ἀνάπαυσις*), originally a unity of body and soul. He reveals himself as the Living One by expansion and contraction (*ἔκτασις* and *συστολή*), of which we have a representation in the heart of man). By this process the world was created, when the *Πνεῦμα* (*σοφία*) and the *σῶμα* (*ἔλξη*) were separated and placed in antagonism. Thus the Monas became a Dyas, forming the first *Syzygia* (union) of antagonisms, which was followed by others, consisting of the Divine and the non-Divine (in *nature*—heaven and earth, day and night, light and darkness, life and death, &c. ; among *men*—Adam and Eve, and after that, in inverse order, Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob). *Satan* had originated from an ungodly mixture of the four elements. *Adam* was the primal prophet who had already possessed perfect and absolute truth. In order to stem the growing corruption, Adam appeared under different names and forms, but always bringing one and the same truth. Thus he reappeared in Abel, in Enoch, in Noah, in Abraham, in Isaac, in Jacob, in Moses, and at last in Christ. But along with these revelations prophets of falsehood also came. Thus *John the Baptist* was the counterpart of Christ, *Simon Magus* (the disciple of John) that of Peter. In holy Scripture also Divine is to be distinguished from diabolic prophecy. Allegorical interpretations are to be rejected.

GENTILE GNOSTICISM.

The many and diverse systems of Gentile-Christian Gnosticism may all be arranged under two great classes, according as notions derived from Grecian philosophy—more especially from Platonism and the study of the mysteries—or Dualistic and Parsee views prevailed in them. This arrangement almost coincides with that of the more prominent representatives of that class of heretics into *Egyptian* and *Syrian* Gnostics. However, it is impossible to keep them always quite separate, since the various forms of Gnosticism closely approximate and frequently merge into each other, and since, during their development, these heresies did not remain stationary. Gnosticism reached its highest point during the first

half of the second century, especially during the age of Hadrian. In apostolic times, those Jewish, heathen, and Christian Gnostic elements—which at the commencement of the second century appeared separated, attracted or repelled each other, developed and assumed form—had been a “rudis indigestaque moles.” Even in the system of *Cerinth*, who, as it were, stands on the boundary-line between these two ages, Gentile and Ebionite Gnosis are mixed up. But, not many years afterwards, *Alexandrian* Gnosticism was fully developed by *Basilides*, whose system is moulded after the doctrines of Stoicism, and by *Valentine*, who adopted the views of the Platonists. Another class of Egyptian Gnostics based their systems rather on Grecian and Egyptian mysteries than on Greek philosophy, and mixed the fables of heathen mythology with the facts of Scripture history. Among such attempts we class the various systems of the *Ophites*, which already show a certain hostility to Judaism, and a tendency towards Antinomianism. These tendencies increased and attained their climax in *Carpocrates*, who placed Christianity on exactly the same level with heathenism.—Of *Syrian Gnostics*, *Saturninus* is the most prominent; next to him *Tatian*, whose system, however, has even more of asceticism about it. The Gnosticism of *Bardesanes*, although he was both a Syrian and a Dualist, approximated that of Valentine; in life and doctrine he accommodated himself to the views of the Catholics. The Gnosticism of *Marcion* belongs also to the Syrian school. Setting aside the principles of emanation, of secret doctrine, and of allegorical interpretation, and laying greater stress on Pistis than on Gnosis, Marcion approximated more closely to orthodox views than any other heretical teacher had done; while, by his rejection of the Old Testament, and fanatical hatred to Jewish Christianity, he at the same time occupied a position of greater antagonism to the Church than others. The direct opposite of his system was that of the *Pseudoclement*. Lastly, independent of all these modifications of Gnosticism, *Manichæism*—a combination of Parseeism, of Buddhism, and of Christianity—made its appearance during the third century.

1. CERINTH was a junior contemporary of the Apostle John in Asia Minor. He was the first to propound the peculiar Gnostic dogma of the *Demiurgos*, who, as Creator of the world, is represented as subservient to the Supreme God, without, however,

knowing him. Jesus also, who was the son of Joseph and of Mary, knew him not, until at baptism the *ἄνω Χριστός* descended upon him. Before the crucifixion, which is regarded as merely a human calamity, without any bearing upon salvation, he again left the man Jesus. *Caius* of Rome, who ascribed to Cerinthus the authorship of the Book of Revelation, charges him also with carnally Chiliastic views.

2. THE GNOSTICISM OF BASILIDES. Basilides (*Βασιλείδης*) was a teacher at Alexandria about the year 130. It is the characteristic and fundamental idea of his system, that every development of God and of the world was brought about by an influence from beneath upwards—not, as in the theory of emanation, from above downwards. His system commences with pure non-existence. *Ἦν ὅτε ἦν οὐδέν.* Hence, the principle from which everything originates is *ὁ οὐκ ὄν θεός*, who from out of himself (*ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων*) brings Chaos into being. This Chaos, though itself *οὐκ ὄν*, is yet the *πανσπερμία τοῦ κόσμου*. Thence two sonships (*υἱότητες*), of which the one was already weaker than the other, ascended to the blessed place of not-being (non-existence—*τὰ ὑπερκόσμια*); while a third, which still required purification, had to remain behind in the *πανσπερμία*. The latter, then, is the object of redemption. Next, the great Archon ascended from Chaos to the very boundary of the blessed place, of which he knew nothing, and founded there the *Ogdoas*; after him came a second Archon, who founded the *Hebdomas* (the planet-sky). He reigned over the terrestrial world until Moses revealed the name of the great Archon. Only *Jesus*, the first-born of the third sonship, that had remained behind, obtained and spread the knowledge of the highest God and his kingdom. The sufferings of Christ were necessary for his own salvation, that is, that he might be purified from the elements of the Psyche and of the Hyle. Then he ascended to the highest God, whither, gradually, all other pneumatic natures are to follow him. Ultimately, God pours out *great ignorance* over all stages of existence, that their blessedness may not be disturbed by their knowledge of still higher bliss. Such, according to Clemens Alexandrinus and Hippolytus, are the fundamental ideas of the system of Basilides. *Irenæus* and *Epiphanius* attach that name, however, to a totally different system—doubtless describing the later sect of the so-called PSEUDO-BASILIDIANS. In their system,

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the great Archon alone is represented as the highest God, the "pater innatus." But between the great Archon and the Archon of the Hebdomas not less than 365 spiritual spheres (= Ἀβραξάς, Ἀβρασαδέξ) intervene. Since the οὐκ ὄν θεός and the πανσπερμία had been discarded, it became necessary to adopt certain dualistic, emanatistic, and docetic views, such as, that beneath the Pleroma lay an eternal Hyle, which attracted some particles of light, and fixed them down in matter, &c. The Pseudo-Basilidians fell into Antinomianism and Libertinism. *Basilides* himself left twenty-four books ἐξηγητικά, and his son *Isidore* a work entitled ἡθικά.—Com. G. *Uhlhorn*, das basilid. System. Göttg. 1855. Also, *A. Hilgenfeld*, Die Jüd. Apokalyptik. App. pp. 289, &c. Jena, 1857.

3. THE Gnosticism of Valentinus.—*Valentinus*, a teacher in Alexandria and at Rome about the middle of the second century, was of all Gnostics the most deep, ingenious, and imaginative, and his system is equally remarkable for its speculation and its poetry. Its fundamental idea is, that, according to a law inherent in the Divine Being, the Æons emanated in pairs, and with the difference of sexes. Every such holy marriage of Æons he designates a *Syzygia*. Connected with this is another peculiar view, according to which the three catastrophes of terrestrial history (creation, the fall, and redemption), had already occurred in archetype in the history of the development of the Pleroma. On this basis he reared a grand and most poetic Epos, consisting of a partly Christian and partly mythological theogony and cosmogony. From the Βυθός or Αὐτοπάτωρ and his Ἐννοία (or Σιγή) emanated fifteen pairs of Æons, which, with the Father of all, formed the Pleroma. Σοφία, the last and lowest of these Æons, impelled by a burning desire, forsakes her husband in order to throw herself into the Bythos, for the purpose of embracing the Great Father himself. She is, indeed, prevented from carrying this into execution; but a rupture has taken place in the Pleroma. Disorder and passion (her ἐπιθύμησις) is eliminated and driven forth from the Pleroma. This, then, is an abortion, an ἔκτρομα, which still possesses, however, an Æonic nature (κάτω Σοφία). To redeem and to bring her back into the Pleroma—such is the object of the development of the world. For the purpose of providing a Saviour and future husband for her, all the Æons combine in

emanating a new Æonic Being, glorious above all measure—the *Σωτήρ*, or heavenly *Jesus*. Meantime, the *κάτω Σοφία*, which is also called *Ἀχαμώθ*, gives birth to the various grades of life in the Cosmos. All hylic natures are under the government of *Satan*, all psychical under that of the *Demiurgos*, while she herself directs those that are pneumatic. To his chosen people, the Jews, the *Demiurgos* sends a Messiah, the *κάτω χριστός*, on whom at baptism the *ἄνω Σοτήρ* descends. The *Demiurgos* is astonished, but submits to the will of the higher deities. The Pneumatics are led to perfectness by *γνώσις*, the Physical by *πίστις*. Ultimately, *Achamoth* returns with the Pneumatics to the *Pleroma*, where she is united to the *Soter*, and the Pneumatics to the angels of the *Soter*. The *Demiurgos* and his pious ones occupy the *τόπος τῆς μεσότητος*; but from the depths of Hyle bursts forth a fire which consumes them and itself.—Among the numerous disciples of Valentinus we mention *Heracleon*, the first commentator of the Gospel according to John.

4. In its original form, the GNOSTICISM OF THE OPHITES consisted of a fantastic combination of Grecian mythology and biblical history, both being mystically interpreted, just as the heathen mysteries had been by philosophers. Under all the modifications of this system, a prominent part was assigned to the *Serpent* (*ὄφις*, *שׂרָפָן*), either as being the evil principle, or else as the *Agathodæmon*. This is explained from the circumstance that, both in Egyptian worship, in the Grecian mysteries, and in Biblical history, the serpent was prominently brought forward. Hippolytus describes, under the name of NAASSENES, one of the earliest forms of Ophite Gnosticism, of which the system is comparatively simple. In it the serpent was the *Agathodæmon*. More fully developed than this was the system of the Gnostic JUSTINUS, who adopted the whole Grecian mythology. He regarded the *Nachash* as an evil demon. The PERATICS, a party of which *Euphrates* and *Chelbes* were the founders, taught that it was necessary to leave Egypt (which was a representation of the body), to pass (*περᾶν*) through the Red Sea (the things that pass away) into the wilderness, where, indeed, the gods of destruction (represented by the fiery serpents which destroyed the Jews) awaited us, but where also Christ the Saviour (represented by the serpent which Moses had lifted up) brought salvation and deliverance. The

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SETHIANS maintained that originally there had been two races of men—one psychical, at the head of which stood *Abel*; the other hylic, at the head of which was *Cain*. But with *Seth* commenced a third race—that of the Pneumatics or Gnostics. The Hylics had perished in the Flood, but returned in the descendants of *Ham*. At last *Seth* appeared a second time in *Christ*. In direct opposition to this sect, the CAINITES declared that all those persons who in the Old Testament had been described as ungodly, were genuine Pneumatics and martyrs of truth. The first who distinguished himself in the contest with the God of the Jews, was *Cain*; the last, who brought this contest to a victorious termination, by bringing, in his deeper wisdom, the psychical Messiah to the cross, and thus destroying the kingdom of the God of the Jews, was *Judas Iscariot*. Their Antinomianism led to the most shameless excesses.—The OPHITES, whom *Irenæus* and *Epiphanius* describe, seem to have indulged in abstruse transformations of the Biblical history in Gen. i.—iii., and to have derived their views originally from the system of *Valentine*. According to them, the *Sophia-Achamoth* precipitated herself into Chaos, where she gave birth to *Jaldabaoth*, the Creator of the world, who in turn renounced allegiance to his mother. But he also was disowned by the star-spirits which he had created, and by *Ophiomorphos*, or Satan. From a feeling of jealousy, *Jaldabaoth* had interdicted man from the tree of knowledge; but the serpent *Achamoth* persuaded him to disobey, and thus procured him liberty and knowledge. *Jaldabaoth* selected the Jews as his favourite people, sent prophets to them, and at last a Messiah, who was to obtain for them dominion over the Gentiles. On him the Anochrist descended; but the wicked *Jaldabaoth* now caused his own Messiah to be crucified. Before that, however, the heavenly Christ had already forsaken that Messiah, and, invisible to *Jaldabaoth*, sat down at the right hand of the latter—thus withdrawing from him any elements of light which he still retained, &c.—The book *Pistis Sophia* (ed. *Schwartz* et *Petermann*, cooptice et lat. Berol., 1851) is one of the latest and best productions of Ophite Gnosticism, strongly tinged, however, with the views of *Valentine*.

5. The Gnosticism of CARPOCRATES.—The opposition to Judaism, which had so distinctly appeared among the Cainites

and the Ophites, developed, in the system of *Carpocrates* and his adherents, into open and pantheistic heathenism. They regarded Christ in exactly the same light as they did Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle. Genuine Christianity they held to be equivalent with philosophical heathenism; all popular creeds, especially that of the Jews, had originated with demons (the *ἄγγελοι κοσμοποιῶν*). True religion consisted in return to the lost unity with the "one and all," attained theoretically by Gnosis, and practically by transgressing the law of the Demiurgos. In this respect *Christ* had distinguished himself before all others. In their temples they paid divine homage to pictures of Christ and of heathen philosophers, which they placed by the side of each other. The Carpoeratians built in Cephalonia a temple to *Epiphanes*, the son of Carpoocrates, a youth of great talent, but wholly steeped in vice, who died in the seventeenth year of his age. At the close of their agapes they had "conubitus promiscuos."

6. The ANTITACTES.—Almost all the Alexandrian Gnostics ultimately landed in Antinomianism and gross immorality, on the principle that he who was perfect must be able to bid defiance to the law (*ἀντιτάσσεισθαι*); and that in order to break the power of Hyle, it was necessary to weaken and to mortify the flesh (*παρὰχρησθαι τῇ σαρκί*) by carnal indulgences. Among them we reckon, besides the *Nicolaitans* and the *Simonians*, the Pseudo-Basilidians, the Carpoeratians, the Cainites, and also the PRODICIANS, who, as the sons of the king, deemed themselves above the law, which had been given to servants.

7. The first in the series of SYRIAN *Gnostics* was SATURNINUS, who lived at the time of Hadrian. According to him, the spiritual world of the kingdom of light had gradually emanated from the θεὸς ἄγνωστος. The lowest stage was occupied by the seven planet-spirits (*ἄγγελοι κοσμοκράτορες*), presided over by the God of the Jews. But from all eternity Satan, the ruler of Hyle, had been most violently opposed to the kingdom of light. The seven planet-spirits intended to found an empire independent of the Pleronia, and for that purpose made an incursion into the kingdom of Hyle, and partly gained possession of it. This they fashioned into the sensuous world, and created man, its guardian, after a luminous image sent by the good God, of which they had perceived the reflection. But they were unable to give man an

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upright posture. On this the supreme God took pity on the wretched creation of their hands. He imparted to man a spark of light (*σπινθήρ*), by which he was filled with pneumatic life, and enabled to stand upright. But by means of a hylic race, which Satan created, he opposed the pneumatic race, and continually persecuted it by his demons. The God of the Jews, therefore, resolved to redeem the persecuted by a Messiah, and he raised up prophets to announce his coming. But Satan also sent prophets. At last the good God sent the Æon *Noûs* to this earth, arrayed, not in a real, but in what seemed a body, that as *σωτήρ* he might teach the Pneumatics, not only to protect themselves by means of Gnosis and asceticism (abstinence from marriage and meats) from the attacks of Satan, but thereby also to withdraw themselves from the dominion of the God of the Jews and of his star-spirits, and to purify themselves from all communion with matter, in order to rise to the kingdom of light.

8. TATIAN (*ob.* about 174) came from Assyria, and was a Rhetor at Rome, where, through the influence of *Justin* Martyr, he became a convert to Christianity. But at a later period he adopted Gnostic views, which he zealously spread both in his writings and his teaching. He interdicted marriage as a service of Satan, and also the use of intoxicating liquors. On account of their rigid abstinence, his adherents were called *Ἐγκραταίαι*, and also *Ὑδροταρασάται*, *Aquarii*, because in the Lord's Supper they used water instead of wine.

9. BARDESANES, from Edessa (about the year 170), was a very learned man, and an able religious poet. In his sermons he did not oppose the teaching of the Church, but by his hymns diffused his Gnostic views. The same remark applies to *Harmonius*, his son, who also was a poet.

10. MARCION, a native of Sinope and the son of a bishop, was a man of energetic but pugnacious disposition. Being excommunicated by his father on account of his pride, he betook himself to Rome, where *Cerdo*, a Syrian Gnostic, imbued him with his own peculiar views (about 150). The absolute and irreconcilable antagonism between justice and mercy, between law and gospel, between Judaism and Christianity, formed the fundamental idea of his system. Hence, besides the two principles of Syrian Gnosticism—the good and the evil God—he introduced a third—the

just God—who was the Creator of the world and the Lawgiver. To the latter, Judaism was subject, as heathenism to the evil God. At last the good God, who hitherto had been wholly unknown, in *free grace* resolved on delivering man from the dominion of both these deities. For this purpose he sent his Logos (who, however, differed from him only *modaliter* not *personaliter*) into the world in what appeared to be a body. By way of accommodation, this Logos gave himself out to be the Messiah promised by the God of the Jews; he announced forgiveness of sins by free grace, and to all who believed imparted the powers of a divine life. The Demiurgos, indignant at this, put him to the cross (to apparent death), when he went to preach in Hades to those of the heathen who are susceptible of the gospel, next cast the Demiurgos into Hades, and called the Apostle Paul to be the teacher of believers. In a work—the Antitheses—he endeavoured to show that the antagonism between the Old and the New Testament was irreconcilable. Of all the apostles, he only recognised the authority of Paul; the rest, he thought, had relapsed into Judaism. But he also rejected the pastoral letters (of Paul) and that to the Hebrews, and acknowledged only ten of the Epistles of Paul and a mutilated edition of the Gospel according to Luke. He disapproved of all pomp and ceremonies in public worship, to which he also admitted catechumens and heathen. Strict asceticism, the use of only so much nourishment as was absolutely necessary, and abstinence from marriage, were incumbent on the “Electi.” The moral earnestness and the practical tendency of his teaching gathered around him many adherents, and this sect continued much longer than other Gnostics. To his query, “whether he knew him,” Polycarp, who met him in Rome, replied—Ἐπιγνώσκω τὸν πρωτότοκον τοῦ Σατανᾶ.

11. HERMOGENES, a painter in North Africa (about the end of the second century), equally rejected the Catholic doctrine of creation and the Gnostic theory of emanation, since both made God the author of sin. He therefore assumed an eternal chaos, in the resistance of which against the creative and formative agency of God, all that was evil and deformed had its origin. His views were refuted by *Tertullian*.

MANICHÆISM.

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Independent of Christian Gnosticism, which developed in the Roman empire during the second century, and more or less under the influence of Grecian forms of culture, *Manichæism* sprung up in the *Persian* empire towards the end of the third century. In many respects its principles and tendency coincided with those of Gnosticism, especially with that form of it which the Syrian Gnostics had adopted. But Manichæism differed from Gnosticism chiefly in employing Christian ideas and notions merely as a gloss for heathen theosophy, in bearing no reference whatever to Judaism, in prominently bringing forward, instead of Platonic views, Persian Dualism, and combining it with Buddhist ideas. From the first, also, it laid claim, not merely to the title of an esoteric religion destined for a few choice spirits, but to form a Church of its own, with a regular constitution and an organized worship—an attempt which, as the result proved, was not wholly unsuccessful.

1. According to the most reliable authorities, MANI, the founder of this religion, had sprung from one of the families of the Persian Magi. Although professing Christianity, and invested with the office of presbyter, he continued to cherish his early Parsee views. Amid the religious movements which, after the overthrow of the Parthian Arsacidæ and the accession of the Sassanidæ (227), had the revival of the ancient national faith for their aim, he conceived the idea of founding a new and universal religion, by combining Christianity with Parseeism. Accordingly, in 270, under the reign of Shapur I. (Sapores), he came forward as reformer and founder of a new party, claiming to be the Paraclete promised by Christ, (John xvi. 13, &c.) Excommunicated by the Christians and persecuted by the Magi, he had to flee, and travelled through India as far as China, all the time gathering fresh materials for his religious system. After that, he lived for a period in a cave in Turkistan, where he composed a work, full of gorgeous imagery, intended to express in symbols his doctrine (the “*Ertenki Mani*,” the Gospel of his adherents). He then returned to Persia. The new king, *Hormuz*, protected him; but *Behram* (Varanes), his successor, obliged him to discuss his system with the Magi, declared them victorious, and caused Mani to be flayed alive (277). Soon after the founder’s death, the sect spread throughout

the Roman empire. On account of its origin among the hostile Persians, Diocletian persecuted the party; while, on the other hand, the opposition of the Catholic State-Church of the Roman Empire secured for it, at a later period, protection in Persia. By secret tradition the sect seems to have continued to the middle ages, when it frequently re-appeared.

2. The ancient Persian Dualism formed the fundamental idea in the SYSTEM of Mani. The good God and his twelve Æons (Ormuzd and his Amshaspands and Izeds) was from all eternity opposed by Satan and his demons (Ahriman and the Dews). Attracted by the beauty of the kingdom of light, Satan made an inroad upon it. God appointed an Æon (*"the mother of life"*) to be the guardian of the boundaries of the kingdom of light. This Æon gave birth to the *ideal man*, who, together with the five pure elements (fire, light, &c.), entered into the contest, but succumbed and became a prisoner. God now sends another Æon, *"the living Spirit,"* to assist him; but he arrives too late, as the powers of darkness have already swallowed up a portion of his luminous essence (the soul of the world, or the *"Jesus patibilis"*). The ideal man, so far as preserved, that is, Christ (or the *"Jesus impatibilis"*), is now transported to the Sun. From the mixture above mentioned, God had caused the visible world to be formed by the *"living Spirit,"* in order that the captive particles of light might gradually regain strength and freedom. Besides *"the soul of light,"* every man has also an evil soul. The former is to gain victory and dominion over the latter by appropriating the elements of light scattered in nature, and principally in plants. This process of purification is superintended by the ideal man *Christ*, who resides in the Sun, and by the *living Spirit*, who resides in ether. On the other hand, the Demons attempt, by means of the false religions of Judaism and heathenism, to bind souls more closely to the kingdom of darkness. At last Christ himself descends from the Sun in what appears to be a body, in order, by his teaching, to give liberty to the *"souls of light."* But the apostles misunderstood and falsified his doctrine; Mani, the promised Paraclete (not the Holy Ghost), is to restore it to purity. As such, he was the head of the Church. Under him were twelve apostles (magistri) and seventy-two bishops, besides presbyters, deacons, and evangelists. The community consisted of catechumens (auditores)

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and the elect (or perfect). The latter were to practise the strictest asceticism, to abstain from flesh, from eggs, milk, wine, &c., and had to remain unmarried (*Signaculum oris, manuum et sinus*). Baptism and the Lord's Supper—the former with oil, the latter without wine—formed part of the secret worship of the perfect. Oil and bread were regarded as those pure products of the soul of the world, which, in vegetable life, struggled after freedom (or the “*Jesus patibilis*”). Their principal festival was the anniversary of the martyrdom of Mani, when they bowed in worship before a splendid pulpit, the symbol of their divine teacher.—*Kurtz*.

IV.

PRIMITIVE FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

THE design of this work forbids the discussion of the vexed question of Church Government, which must be studied in works expressly treating of the subject. The following extract from an article on the subject in Kitto's *Biblical Cyclopædia* well defines the point from which the three rival forms diverge, and may be useful as indicating the real *status questionis* of a long and voluminous controversy:—

“Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists agree in one point, namely, that (because of its utility and general convenience) it is lawful for Christians to take a step, for which they have no clear precedent in the Scriptures, that of breaking up a Church when it becomes of unwieldy magnitude into fixed divisions, whether parishes or congregations. The question then arises whether the organic union is to be retained still at all. To this (1) Congregationalists reply in the negative, saying, that the congregations of a great city no more need to be in organic union than those of two different cities; (2) Presbyterians would keep up the union by means of a synod [or Presbytery] of the elders; (3) Episcopalians desire to unite the separate churches by retaining them under the supervision of a single head—the bishop.”

It is obvious that so long as the Christian community in any place remained undivided and constituted one congregation, the Episcopal and Presbyterian systems would practically coincide—

the bishop, presbyters, and deacons of the one corresponding to the minister (or presiding presbyter) presbyters, and deacons of the other. The real question is as to what was done when the separation took place. Did a single person still preside over the whole community thus subdivided, or were their common affairs regulated by a council of co-equal presbyters? In other words, did the original congregation develop itself into a diocese or into a presbytery?

Could we certainly point out any Church during the apostolic age already divided into distinct and permanent congregational bodies, and yet still remaining under one chief pastor, that would go far to decide the point. That there were and must have been such, as for instance at Jerusalem and Antioch, Episcopalian writers maintain, and Presbyterians deny.

It is of importance to disentangle this question from that of the three orders (there being in a sense three orders, or at least functions of ministry under both systems); as well as from that which relates to the words *episcopos* and *presbyteros*, which are now on all hands admitted to have been at first used interchangeably.

V.

THE LOVE-FEAST.

IN the apostolic period the eucharist was celebrated daily in connection with a simple meal of brotherly love (*agape*), in which the Christians in communion with their common Redeemer, forgot all distinctions of rank, wealth, and culture, and felt themselves to be members of one family of God. But this childlike exhibition of brotherly unity became more and more difficult as the Church increased, and led to all sorts of abuses, such as we find rebuked in the Corinthians by Paul. The love-feasts, therefore, which indeed were no more enjoined by law, than the community of goods at Jerusalem, were gradually severed from the eucharist, and in the course of the second and third centuries gradually disappeared.—*Schaff*.

The following account of the history of this rite, extracted

from "Riddle's Christian Antiquities," will be read with interest by the student:—

ORIGIN OF THE NAME AND OF THE CUSTOM.

The Greek word *Agape* (*ἀγάπη*), which signifies love or charity, is used in ecclesiastical antiquities to denote a certain feast, of which all members of the Church, of whatever rank or condition, partook together; intended to denote and cherish those dispositions of humility and brotherly affection which the gospel prescribes to the disciples of Jesus. In the New Testament the word occurs only once in this sense of *feast of charity*, or *love-feast*, namely, in the Epistle of St. Jude, verse 12, and there it is found in the plural number; but the observance itself is alluded to in the sacred records under other names, as *meat*, *tables*, Acts ii. 46; vi. 2. The word was retained by ecclesiastical writers, but not to the exclusion of other significant appellations; *e. g.*, *συνπόσια*, *banquets*; *κοινὰ τράπεζαι*, *public tables*; *κοινὰ ἐστιάσεις*, *public feasts*; *δεῖπνα κοινά*, *public suppers*. This use of the term *Ἀγάπη* is not found in the writings of any profane authors before the Christian era; but it occurs in the works of Plutarch and Celsus, who doubtless borrowed it from the Christians.

It is certain that the feast of charity was celebrated in the earliest period of the Christian Church (see Acts ii. 46; vi. 2; 1 Cor. xi. 16–34). Some writers suppose that this custom had its remote origin in the practice of the heathen; while others regard it as derived from the Jewish synagogue. But it is perhaps still more probable that it originated simply in the circumstances of our Lord's last supper with his disciples; or that, at all events, it is to be attributed entirely to the genius of a religion which is eminently a bond of brotherly union and concord among its sincere professors.

MODE OF CELEBRATION.

In the earliest accounts which have come down to us, we find that the bishop or presbyter presided at these feasts (JUSTIN MARTYR, *Apolog.* 2; see also 1 Cor. xii.). It does not appear whether the food was dressed in the place appointed for the celebration of the feast, or was previously prepared by individual members of the Church at their own homes; but perhaps either

of these plans was adopted indifferently, according to circumstances. Before eating, the guests washed their hands; and a public prayer was offered up. A portion of Scripture was then read, and the president proposed some questions upon it, which were answered by the persons present. After this, any accounts which had been received respecting the affairs of other Churches were recited; for, at that time, such accounts were regularly transmitted from one community to another, by means of which all Christians became acquainted with the history and condition of the whole body, and were thus enabled to sympathize with, and in many cases to assist, each other. Letters from bishops and other eminent members of the Church, together with the Acts of the Martyrs, were also recited on this occasion. And hymns or psalms were sung (CYPRIAN. *Ep. de Spectac.*; TERTULL. *de Coron.* c. 3; SOCRAT. *Hist. Eccl.* lib. v. c. 22). At the close of the feast, money was collected for the benefit of widows and orphans, the poor, prisoners, and persons who had suffered shipwreck. Before the meeting broke up, all the members of the Church embraced each other, in token of mutual brotherly love; and the whole ceremony was concluded with a philanthropic prayer (JUSTIN MARTYR, *Apol.* ii.; ORIGEN. *in Ep. ad Rom.* xvi. 16).

As the number of Christians increased, various deviations from the original practice of celebration occurred; which called for the censure of the governors of the Church (CLEM. ALEX. *Pædagog.* ii. 1, 2). In consequence of these irregularities, it was appointed that the president should deliver to each guest his portion separately, and that the larger portions should be distributed among the presbyters, deacons, and other officers of the Church.

While the Church was exposed to persecution, these feasts were not only conducted with regularity and good order, but were made subservient to Christian edification, and to the promotion of brotherly love, and of that kind of concord and union which was specially demanded by the circumstances of the times (TERTULL. *Apol.* c. 39). None but full members of the Church were allowed to be present; catechumens, penitents, Jews, and heathens, being carefully excluded (JUSTIN MART. *Apol.* ii. c. 97). A custom of admitting baptized children, which was introduced at an early period, was afterwards abandoned as inconvenient (CYPRIAN. *De Lapsis*).

TIME AND PLACE OF CELEBRATION.

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1. *Time of Day*.—These feasts, as well as all Christian assemblies, were held, at first, whenever and wherever opportunity would permit, consistently with safety. The passages of the New Testament which refer to the Agapæ afford no intimation of the time of day in which they were celebrated, unless indeed we regard Acts xx. 7, as supplying some information on this point. From Tertullian it would appear that they were held in the night; for he calls them *Cœnæ* and *Cœnulæ*, in contradistinction to *prandia*; and this writer gives us to understand that lights were required in the place in which the feast was made. But it is probable that this nocturnal celebration was more a matter of necessity than of choice.

According to the account of Pliny in his letter to Trajan, it would seem that in his time (in Bithynia, at least) these feasts were held in the day-time (See CHRYSOSTOM *ad* 1 Cor. xi. *Hom.* 54, and *Hom.* 22 on the text *Oportet hæreses esse*).

On the whole, it may be concluded that the nature of the case did not permit the uniform observance of any fixed hour or time of day in the celebration of this feast, during the earliest period of the Church, while it was exposed to persecution.

2. *Day of the Week*.—These feasts were ordinarily held on the first day of the week, or Sunday; but the celebration does not appear to have been exclusively confined to that day (Acts xx. 7; TERTULL. *ad Uxor.* lib. ii.; CYPRIAN. *de Orat. Domini*).

3. *Place of Meeting*.—At first, the Agapæ were celebrated in private houses, or in other retired places, in which the Christians met for the purpose of religious worship. After the erection of churches, these feasts were held within their walls; until, abuses having occurred which rendered the observance inconsistent with the sanctity of such places, this practice was forbidden. In the middle of the fourth century, the Council of Laodicea enacted “that Agapæ should not be celebrated in churches;” a prohibition which was repeated by the third Council of Carthage, in the year 391; and was afterwards strictly enjoined during the sixth and seventh centuries (*Conc. Aurelian.* ii. A.D. 535; *Conc. Trullan.* A.D. 692). By the efforts of Gregory of Neocæsarea, Chrysostom, and others a custom was generally established of holding the

Agapæ only under trees, or some other shelter, in the neighbourhood of the churches; and from that time the clergy and other principal members of the Church were recommended to withdraw from them altogether.

In the early Church, it was usual to celebrate Agapæ on the festivals of martyrs (agapæ natalitiæ) at their tombs; a practice to which reference is made in the epistle of the Church of Smyrna concerning the martyrdom of Polycarp. (See also THEODORET. *Hist. Eccl.* lib. iii. c. 15; *Evang. Verit.* viii. p. 633-34, ed. Schultz.)

These feasts were sometimes celebrated on a smaller scale, at marriages (agapæ connubiales) and funerals (agapæ funerales).

ABOLITION OF THE CUSTOM.

The celebration of the Agapæ was frequently made a subject of calumny and misrepresentation by the enemies of the Christian faith, even during the earliest and best ages of the Church. In reply to these groundless attacks, the conduct of the Christians of those times was successfully vindicated by Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Origen, and others. But real disorders having afterwards arisen, and having proceeded to considerable lengths, it became necessary to abolish the practice altogether; and this task was eventually effected, but not without the application of various means, and only after a considerable lapse of time.

VI.

THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS.

THE name of Apostolic Fathers has been given to those uninspired writers who were disciples, or at least contemporaries of the apostles. There are seven usually reckoned, though the authenticity of several is still disputed.

The first place in the catalogue is commonly assigned to *Clement* of Rome (or Clemens Romanus), represented by tradition as one of the earliest bishops of that Church, and supposed to be the person named by Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians (iv. 3), as one of his fellow-labourers. An epistle of this Clement to the

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Church at Corinth was not only well known to the ancients, but actually read in public worship; but when this was discontinued, perhaps on the final settlement of the Canon, the epistle was lost sight of until re-discovered in the seventeenth century, as forming part of the contents of the famous Codex Alexandrinus, of which some account will be given in another place. It is an earnest exhortation to humility and concord, modelled upon Paul's epistles, but without much original or independent value. The same manuscript contains a portion of another composition under the name of Clement, commonly called his second epistle, but more correctly described as a homily or discourse, and of very doubtful genuineness, as it is not mentioned by the ancient writers, though it may be of the same age, and available in illustration of the later Hellenistic dialect. Other writings, once ascribed to Clement, such as the Clementina, the Apostolical Canons, Apostolical Constitutions, and a few decretal briefs or letters, are undoubtedly of later date, and will be here left out of view entirely, as belonging to the ecclesiastical history and literature of succeeding centuries.

Under the name of *Barnabas* there is extant an epistle which was certainly known to Clement of Alexandria, and which many still regard as the production of the Barnabas so often mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles and in Paul's epistles; while others infer from its allegorical interpretations of Scripture, and the disrespect with which it seems to treat the institutions of the old economy, that it is of a later date, and either a forgery (or pious fraud), or possibly the composition of some other Barnabas, erroneously confounded with the primitive missionary or apostle. Even Eusebius and Jerome regard it as apocryphal,—that is, not belonging to the Canon.

Another name occurring in the New Testament, and also as the author of an extant writing, is that of *Hermas* (*Hermes*), named by Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (xvi. 14), and in the title of a book called the *Shepherd*, which we find referred to, as an ancient composition, by Origen in the third century. It consists of three parts, the first of which contains four Visions, the second twelve Mandates, and the third ten Similitudes, the whole communicated by an angel in the form of a shepherd. This book, though fanciful and mystical, was highly esteemed in the ancient Church,

being often read in worship, and regarded as inspired by such men as Origen and Irenæus. The Muratori fragment before mentioned, represents it as the work of another Hermas, the brother of Pius, who was bishop of Rome about the middle of the second century. The intrinsic value of the work is small, and even its literary interest for us not great, as it now exists only in the form of a very ancient Latin version.

The same thing is partially true of an undisputed writing of the same class, an epistle of *Polycarp*, bishop of Smyrna, a disciple of St. John, and an eminent martyr under Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 168). This epistle is addressed to the Philippians, and is valuable chiefly on account of its citations or references to the New Testament. Of the Greek original there are only fragments extant, but a complete Latin version.

Ostensibly much earlier in date, but of far more doubtful authenticity, are the famous epistles of *Ignatius*, bishop of Smyrna, and martyr, under Trajan, which have been a subject of dispute for ages. The maximum number is fifteen, but a majority of these, five in Greek, and three in Latin, are now unanimously looked upon as spurious. The remaining seven exist in two forms (or recensions), a longer or a shorter, each of which is claimed to be the original by many learned writers. Within a few years a still shorter form in Syriac has been recently discovered, and is by some regarded as the original form, by others as a mere abridgment or mutilation of it, while a third class reject all three recensions as alike supposititious. The epistles are remarkable for earnest opposition to certain forms of heresy, and zealous assertion of the divinity of Christ, but chiefly for the zeal with which they urge the claims of the episcopate, and which has given them importance in connection with exciting questions of Church government. Whether written by Ignatius or not, their language is essentially the Greek of the New Testament, and therefore Hellenistic.

Papias, bishop of Hierapolis (and martyr), like Polycarp, is said to have been a disciple of St. John, and a diligent collector of the sayings and doings of our Lord, as preserved by oral tradition. His book (*λογίων κυριακῶν ἐξήγησις*) exists only in fragments, preserved by Irenæus and Eusebius. The latter describes him as a man of little mind and a gross Chiliast, which error was extensively promoted by his writings.

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With these apostolical fathers, commonly so called, is usually classed the anonymous writer of the epistle to *Diognetus*, once ascribed to Justin Martyr, because found among his works, but now regarded as of earlier date, and by one who describes himself as ἀποστόλων γενόμενος μαθητής. It is an eloquent defence of Christianity against the objections of an intelligent heathen friend, and is much more elegant in style than most Hellenistic writings.

Not only as a specimen of Hellenistic literature, but as a connecting link between the apostolical and later Christian writings, these works are entitled to attention on the part of ministers and others who are interested in the early Church, though only few may be called to spend much time upon them. They have been translated into English more than once, the best known version being by an archbishop of Canterbury in the early part of the last century (Dr. Wake), who was disposed, however, to exaggerate their value. Among the editions of the original, there is a beautiful and cheap one in a single volume, edited by Hefele, a Roman Catholic professor of high standing.—*Notes on New Testament Literature, &c., by Dr. J. A. Alexander, New York.*

 VII.

IGNATIAN EPISTLES.

OF all the writings of the apostolic fathers, none have been so much discussed, especially in modern times, as the Ignatian Epistles. This arises partly from the importance of their contents to the episcopal question, partly from the fact of so many different versions. The latter fact seems to argue as strongly *for* the hypothesis of a genuine *basis* for all, as *against* the supposition of the *full* integrity of any one of the extant texts. The Ignatian controversies have not yet reached a satisfactory result, though they have made considerable progress towards one. In the first place, it is now on all hands agreed, that of the fifteen epistles which bear the name of Ignatius, at least eight are wholly spurious and of later origin; namely, three Latin (two ad S. Joannem Apost., and one ad S. Mariam Virginem, to which is added a Responsio of Mary), and five Greek (ad Mariam Casso-

bolitam, with an answer; ad Tarsenses; ad Antiochenos; ad Heronem Diaconum Antiochenum; and ad Philippenses). Their many offences against history and chronology are alone decisive against them. There remain therefore, at most, the seven epistles which have been named in the text above, and are cited by Eusebius. But here the views of critics diverge.

1. The *longer Greek recension*, first published by Pacaeus in 1557, and by Gessner in 1559 (in connection with five spurious epistles), has found defenders in Whiston (1710), and even more recently in C. Meier (1836); but since Rothe (1837) and Arndt (1839) refuted their arguments, it has been universally given up, as a later expansion.

2. The *shorter Greek recension* was first published by Archbishop Usher, in 1644; and then by Isaac Vossius, from a Medicean codex, in 1646. We have from it also fragments of a Syriac version (in Cureton), and an Armenian version, apparently from the Syriac (printed in 1783 in Constantinople, and compared by Petermann). In regard to this Greek Text there are three views, among which scholars are divided: (a) Its genuineness and integrity are advocated by Pearson (*Vindiciae Ignatianae*, 1672, against the doubts of the acute Calvinistic divine, Dallaens, who, together with Salmasius, Blondel, and Sam. Basnage, suspected the whole Ignatian Epistles, on account, especially, of their strong episcopal tendency); latterly by Gieseler, Möhler (R. C.), Rothe (1837), Huther (1841), Düsterdieck (1843), Dorner (1845); and (since the publication of the shorter Syriac version) by Jacobson, Hefele (R. C., 1847 and 1855), Denzinger (R. C., 1849), Petermann (1849), Wordsworth, Churton (1852); and most thoroughly by Uhlhorn (1851 and '56). (b) The friends of the three Syriac epistles (see below, under No. 3) let only so many of the seven epistles stand as agree with those. Also Mosheim, Neander, Thiersch (1852), and Lechler (1857) are inclined to suppose at least interpolation. (c) Baur (first against Rothe, 1838, then against Bunsen, 1848 and '53), Schwegler (1846), and more thoroughly Hilgenfeld (1853), allow it, indeed, the advantage of greater age over the Syriac text, but deny it, with all other recensions, to Ignatius, and declare it a fiction of the later half of the second century; partly because the entire historical situation implied in it is in itself improbable, partly because it advocates a

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form of Church government and combats Gnostic heresies which could not have existed in the age of Ignatius. This extreme scepticism is closely connected with the whole view of the Tübingen school in regard to the history of primitive Christianity.

We certainly grant that the integrity of these epistles, even in the shorter copy, is not beyond all reasonable doubt. As the manuscripts of them contain, at the same time, decidedly spurious epistles (even the Armenian translation has thirteen epistles), the suspicion arises, that the seven genuine also have not wholly escaped the hand of the forger. Yet there are, in any case, very strong arguments for their genuineness and substantial integrity, viz.: (a) The testimony of the fathers, especially of Eusebius. (b) The raciness and freshness of their contents, which a forger could not well imitate. (c) The small number of citations from the New Testament, indicating the period of the immediate disciples of the apostles. (d) Their way of combating the Judaists and Docetists (probably Judaizing Gnostics of the school of Cerinthus), showing us Gnosticism as yet in the first stage of its development. (e) Their dogmatical indefiniteness, particularly in regard to the Trinity and Christology, notwithstanding very strong expressions in regard to the divinity of Christ. (f) Their urgent recommendation of episcopacy as an institution still new and fresh. (g) Their entire silence respecting a Roman primacy, even in the Epistle to the Romans.

3. The *Syriac version* contains three epistles (to Polycarp, to the Ephesians, and to the Romans), and even these in a much reduced form—less than half of the corresponding Greek epistles. It has the subscription, “Here end *the three epistles* of the bishop and martyr Ignatius,” on which, however, Bunsen lays too great stress; for, even if it comes from the translator himself, and not from a mere transcriber, it does not necessarily exclude the existence of other epistles; (comp. Petermann, l. c. p. xxi.) It was discovered in 1839 and '43, by the Rev. Henry Tattam, in a monastery of the Libyan desert, together with 365 other Syriac manuscripts, now in the British Museum; published first by Cureton in 1845, and again in 1849, with the help of a third MS., discovered in 1847, and advocated as genuine by him; as also by Lee (1846), Bunsen (1847), Ritschl (1851 and 1857), Weiss (1852), and most fully by Lipsius (1856). In this view concurs

also the latest editor of the works of the Apostolic Fathers, Dressel, though with the qualification, "Versio Syriaca exhibere videtur genuina spuriis permixta aeque archetypon Graccum. Utri prior locus sit concedendus, id recte definiri non potest, nisi novi testes pro hac aut illa parte reperiantur superstitibus efficaciores" (Patr. Apost. 1857. Prolegg. p. XXIX.)

Now, it is true that all the considerations we have adduced in favour of the shorter Greek text, except the first, are equally good, and some of them even better, for the genuineness of the Syrian Ignatius, which has the additional advantage of lacking many of the most offensive passages, though not in the Epistle to Polycarp. But against the Syriac text is, in the first place, the external testimony of antiquity, especially that of Eusebius, who confessedly knew of and used seven epistles; whereas the manuscript of this version, according to Cureton, belongs, at earliest, to the sixth or seventh century—a much later period—when the longer copy also had become circulated through all the East, and that, too, in a Syriac translation, as the fragments given by Cureton show. Secondly, the internal testimony of the fact that the Syriac text, on close examination, betrays the character of a fragmentary *extract* from the Greek; as Baur, Hilgenfeld, and especially Uhlhorn, by an accurate comparison of the two, have proved in a manner hitherto unrefuted. In this state of the controversy, we must for the present side with the advocates of the genuineness of the shorter seven epistles; hoping that perhaps the discovery of some new manuscripts may clear up the obscurity which still exists.—*Schaff*.

VIII.

CHRISTIAN APOCRYPHAL WRITINGS.

THE last group of writings that can be regarded as belonging to the Hellenistic class, even in the widest sense of the expression, are the New Testament Apocrypha, a heterogeneous mass of forgeries or pseudepigrapha, which sprang up, with a rank growth, chiefly in the second century,¹ intended partly to maintain and

¹ Epiphanius mentions thousands of Gnostic Apocrypha: and Irenæus found, among the Valentiniæans alone, *inerrabilis multitudo apocryphorum et perperam scripturarum*.

propagate heretical opinions; partly to glorify the true religion by the unlawful means of pious frauds, but chiefly to fill up the supposed deficiencies and chasms in the canonical books of the New Testament. Of these writings none are strictly doctrinal in substance, and only one or two epistolary in form, such as the epistle to the Laodiceans, supposed to be referred to in Col. iv. 16, and a third epistle to the Corinthians, supposed to be referred to in 1 Cor. v. 9; to say nothing of the pretended correspondence between Paul and Seneca, or that between our Lord himself and Abgarus, king of Edessa. Some of these writings are pretended prophecies, ascribed to heathen seers (as the Sibylline books, in Homeric hexameters), or to real characters in sacred history, such as the Book of Enoch, the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Ascension of Isaiah, all which contain express predictions of the Saviour and the Christian Church.¹

But most of these Apocrypha are histories, intended to supply the omissions of the Gospels or the Acts. Some, no longer in existence, but referred to by the ancient writers, such as the gospel of the Hebrews, that of the Egyptians, that of Peter, that of Marcion, seem to have been mere corruptions of the canonical four gospels, made for the use of heretical sects. Others, still extant, and more properly denoted by the name Apocrypha, do not purport to be complete histories of Christ, but only supplements relating chiefly to his childhood and his passion. Of the former class, the oldest and the least extravagant is that called the Protevangelium of James the Less, designed to glorify the Virgin Mary, not only as the mother of our Lord, but by relating her whole history. Another of the same general character is the gospel of the nativity of Mary, purporting to be written by Matthew, and translated by Jerome. A third is the history of Joachim and Anna, the nativity of Mary, and the infancy of Christ, chiefly occupied with miracles wrought by him in the flight to Egypt. A fourth is the history of Joseph the carpenter, which dwells chiefly on the circumstances of his death, of which we have no account in the New Testament. Far more absurd than these is the gospel of the Saviour's infancy, containing a multitude of silly

¹ There are also spurious apocalypses under the names of Peter, Paul, Stephen, Thomas, and even John himself, all of which appear to have been more or less absurd imitations of the genuine Apocalypse.

and unmeaning miracles. Still worse is the gospel of Thomas, which pretends to give the life of Christ, from his twelfth to his sixteenth year. The character of these books is evinced by their attempting to supply those omissions which especially illustrate the veracity and wisdom of the true evangelists, and in a way as destitute of taste and common sense as of religious spirit and historical authority.

The other class of apocryphal gospels professes to complete the closing part of our Lord's history, by furnishing additional details as to his passion. The gospel of Nicodemus undertakes to give a formal record of the proceedings before Pilate; an account of two of the resuscitated saints referred to by Matthew (xxvii. 52), and described as sons of Simeon; and a description of our Lord's descent into hell. The Acts of Pilate is a name borne by three distinct works, only one of which is extant. The first was very ancient, being mentioned by Justin Martyr and Tertullian, and contained a report made by Pilate to Tiberius; a communication of the latter to the Senate, proposing to place Christ among the gods; and a letter of Tiberius to his mother. The second Acts of Pilate were of heathen origin, containing blasphemous perversions of the history as given in the gospels. The third, still extant, like the first, though far posterior in date, purports to be a statement made by Pilate to Tiberius of the miracles, death, and resurrection of the Saviour. To these may be added an account of Pilate's punishment, and an epistle of Lentulus to the Roman Senate, containing a description of Christ's personal appearance. The epistle of Lentulus also originated in the middle ages, and several of the others are but little older, while a few of those first mentioned approach very nearly to the time of the apostles, and a large proportion are most probably not later than the second century, which may be regarded as the most prolific period of this supposititious literature.

It is worthy of remark that in this whole collection or farrago, there is not one book, however small, which approaches in literary or religious value to the better books of the Old Testament Apocrypha. Indeed they may all be described as intrinsically worthless, and indebted for whatever adventitious value they possess to their indirect bearing on the genuine New Testament. Their use in this respect is threefold. 1. In the first place, they

illustrate, by a glaring contrast, the perfection of the Scriptures, in comparison with writers of the same race and religion, and in some cases almost of the same age. Even the apostolical fathers answer the same purpose of exhibiting the difference between inspired and uninspired men of the same general character and class; but the contrast is vastly more instructive as presented in these obvious imitations and professed improvements on the sacred record.

In the next place, they illustrate the discretion, care, and even critical skill, with which the ancient Church preserved the sacred Canon, and asserted its exclusive claims against so many, and such impudent competitors. Not that the present Canon is, as some allege, a gradual selection made, as taste and judgment were improved, from a promiscuous mass originally equal in their claims and estimation—which would leave us no alternative but that of making all inspired or none—but because these wretched imitations, all posterior in date to the Canonical Scriptures, by their intrinsic meanness or absurdity, confirm the judgment of the ancients which excludes them from the Canon, and corroborate the external evidence in favour of the twenty-seven books which now compose it.

In the last place, these Apocrypha, intrinsically worthless as they are, possess a certain literary interest, as samples of the language and the dialect employed in the New Testament. But this, which is their only claim to notice here, has reference of course only to such books as now exist in Greek, whether as originals or versions. Some, which were written in that language, are now extant only in translations,—for example, the Ascension of Isaiah, in Ethiopic; the Epistle to the Laodiceans, in Latin; the third to the Corinthians, in Armenian; the *Historia Certaminis Apostolorum*, in a Latin version of a Greek version of a Hebrew original; the History of Joseph, in an Arabic translation from the Coptic; the Nativity of Mary, in a Latin translation from the Greek; the Gospel of the Infancy of Christ, in an Arabic translation from the Syriac, &c. Some—for example, the History of Joachim and Anna, the *Acta Pilati*, as now extant, &c.—seem to be Latin originals, while only a few, but those the oldest, and in other respects the most important—such as the *Protevangelium of James*, the Gospel of Thomas, and of Nicodemus, the *Anabaticon of Pau'*

the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, and the Sibylline Oracles —appear to have existed always in a Greek form. It is only with these, therefore, that we are concerned, as affording illustration to the Greek of the New Testament, and constituting the last class of writings which can be considered as belonging, even in the widest sense of the expression, to the field of Hellenistic literature. [Besides more general and costly collections of the New Testament Apocrypha, Tischendorf has published critical editions of the spurious Acts and Gospels, each in an elegant octavo volume.]—*Alexander.*

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IX.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN PLINY AND TRAJAN.

PLINIUS TRAJANO.

Solenne est mihi, Domine, omnia, de quibus dubito, ad Te referre. Quis enim potest melius vel cunctationem meam regere, vel ignorantiam instruere? Cognitionibus de Christianis interfui nunquam: ideo nescio, quid et quatenus aut puniri soleat aut quæri. Nec mediocriter hæsitavi, sitne aliquod discrimen ætatum, an quamlibet teneri nihil a robustioribus differant; deturme pœnitentiæ venia, an ei, qui omnino Christianus fuit, desiisse non prosit; nomen ipsum etiamsi flagitiis careat, an flagitia cohærentia nomini puniantur? Interim in iis qui ad me tanquam Christiani deferebantur, hunc sum secutus modum. Interrogavi ipsos, an essent Christiani. Confitentes iterum et tertio interrogavi, supplicium minatus: perseverantes duci jussi. Neque enim dubitabam, qualecunque esset quod faterentur, perviciam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri. Fuerunt alii similis amentia: quos, quia cives Romani erant, annotavi in urbem remittendos. Mox ipso tractatu, ut fieri solet, diffundente se crimine, plures species inciderunt. Propositus est libellus sine auctore, multorum nomina continens, qui negarent, se esse Christianos aut fuisse. Cum præeunte me Deos appellarent, et imagini Tuæ, quam propter hoc jusseram cum simulacris numinum afferri, thure ac vino supplicarent, præterea maledicerent Christo, quorum nihil cogi posse

dicuntur, qui sunt revera Christiani, dimittendos esse putavi. Alii ab indice nominati, esse se Christianos dixerunt, et mox negaverunt: fuisse quidem, sed desisse, quidam ante triennium, quidam ante plures annos, nonnemo etiam ante viginti quoque. Omnes et imaginem Tuam, Deorumque simulacra veneratii sunt; et Christo maledixerunt. Affirmabant autem, hanc fuisse summam vel culpæ suæ vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem; seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent; quibus peractis, morem sibi discedendi fuisse rursusque coëundi ad capiendum cibum, promiscuum tamen e innocuum: quod ipsum facere desisse post edictum meum, quo secundum mandata Tua hetærias esse vetueram. Quo magis necessarium credidi, ex duabus ancillis, quæ ministræ dicebantur, quid esset veri et per tormenta quærere. Sed nihil aliud inveni, quam superstitionem pravam et immodicam. Ideoque dilata cognitione ad consulendum Te decurri. Visa est enim mihi res digna consultatione, maxime propter periclitantium numerum. Multi enim omnis ætatis, omnis ordinis, utriusque sexus etiam, vocantur in periculum et vocabuntur: neque enim civitates tantum, sed vicos etiam atque agros, superstitionis istius contagio pervagata est. Quæ videtur sisti et corrigi posse. Certe satis constat, prope jam desolata templa cœpisse celebrari, et sacra solennia diu intermissa repeti, passimque venire victimas, quarum adhuc rarissimus emtor inveniebatur. Ex quo facile est opinari, quæ turba hominum emendari possit, si sit pœnitentiæ locus.

TRAJANUS PLINIO.

Actum, quem debuisti, mi Secunde, in excutiendis causis eorum, qui Christiani ad te delati fuerant, secutus es. Neque enim in universum aliquid, quod quasi certam formam habeat, constitui potest. Conquærendi non sunt: si deferantur et arguantur, puniendi sunt; ita tamen, ut qui negaverit se Christianum esse, idque re ipsa manifestum fecerit—i.e., supplicando Diis nostris, quamvis suspectus in præteritum fuerit, veniam ex pœnitentia impetret. Sine auctore vero propositi libelli, in nullo crimine locum habere debent: nam et pessemi exempli nec nostri seculi est.—Ep. lib. x. p. 96, 97; al 97, 98, Edit. Gierig. vol ii. 1802, p. 498.

PLINY TO THE EMPEROR TRAJAN.

“It is a rule, sir, which I inviolably observe, to refer myself to you in all my doubts; for who is more capable of removing my scruples or informing my ignorance? Having never been present at any trials concerning those who profess Christianity, I am unacquainted, not only with the nature of their crimes or the measure of their punishment, but how far it is proper to enter into an examination concerning them. Whether, therefore, any difference is usually made with respect to the ages of the guilty, or no distinction is to be observed between the young and the adult; whether repentance entitles them to a pardon; or, if a man has once been a Christian, it avails nothing to desist from his error; whether the very profession of Christianity, unattended with any criminal act, or only the crimes themselves inherent in the profession, are punishable; in all these points I am greatly doubtful. In the meanwhile, the method I have observed towards those who have been brought before me as Christians, is this:—I interrogated them whether they were Christians; if they confessed, I repeated the question twice again, adding threats at the same time; when, if they still persevered, I ordered them to be immediately punished; for I was persuaded, whatever the nature of their opinions might be, that a contumacious and inflexible obstinacy certainly deserved correction. There were others also brought before me, possessed with the same infatuation; but being citizens of Rome,¹ I directed them to be carried thither. But this crime spreading (as is usually the case) while it was actually under prosecution, several instances of the same nature occurred. An information was presented to me, without any name prescribed, containing a charge against several persons, who, upon examination, denied they were Christians, or had ever been so. They repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and offered religious rites with wine and frankincense before your statue (which for this purpose I had ordered to be brought, together with those of the gods), and even reviled the name of Christ; whereas there is no

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¹ It was one of the privileges of a Roman citizen, secured by the Sempronian law, that he could not be capitally convicted but by the suffrage of the people; which seems to have been still so far in force as to make it necessary to send the persons here mentioned to Rome.—*Melmoth*.

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forcing, it is said, those who are really Christians into a compliance with any of these articles. I thought proper, therefore, to discharge them. Some of those who were accused by a witness in person, at first confessed themselves Christians, but immediately after denied it; while the rest owned, indeed, that they had been of that number formerly, but had now (some above three, others more, and a few above twenty years ago) forsaken that error. They all worshipped your statue and the images of the gods, throwing out imprecations also at the same time against the name of Christ. They affirmed that the whole of their guilt or error was, that they met on a certain stated day before it was light, and addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some god, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purposes of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery; never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up. After which, it was their custom to separate, and then to re-assemble, to eat in common a harmless meal. From this custom, however, they desisted after the publication of my edict, by which, according to your orders, I forbade the meeting of any assemblies. After receiving this account, I judged it so much the more necessary to endeavour to extort the real truth, by putting two female slaves to the torture, who were said to administer in their religious functions;¹ but I could discover nothing more than an absurd and excessive superstition. I thought proper, therefore, to adjourn all further proceedings in this affair, in order to consult with you. For it appears to be a matter highly deserving your consideration, more especially as great numbers must be involved in the danger of these prosecutions, this inquiry having already extended, and being still likely to extend, to persons of all ranks and ages, and even of both sexes. For this contagious superstition is not confined to the cities only, but has spread its infection among the country villages. Nevertheless, it still seems possible to remedy this evil and restrain its progress. The temples, at least, which were almost deserted, begin now to be frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are again revived; while there is a general demand for the victims, which for some time past have met with but few purchasers. From hence it is easy

¹ Deaconesses.

to imagine what numbers might be reclaimed from this error if a pardon were granted to those who shall repent.”

TRAJAN TO PLINY.

“The method you have pursued, my dear Pliny, in the proceedings against those Christians which were brought before you, is extremely proper, as it is not possible to lay down any fixed plan by which to act in all cases of this nature. But I would not have you officiously enter into any inquiries concerning them. If, indeed, they should be brought before you, and the crime is proved, they must be punished—with this restriction, however, that when the party denies himself to be a Christian, and shall make it evident that he is not, by invoking our gods, let him (notwithstanding any former suspicion) be pardoned upon his repentance. Informations without the accuser’s name subscribed ought not to be received in prosecutions of any sort, as it is introducing a very dangerous precedent, and by no means agreeable to the equity of my government.”

From this record of antiquity we learn several important particulars respecting the early Christians.

1. That they were accustomed to meet on a certain stated day for religious worship—whether on the first or last day of the week does not appear.

2. Their meetings were held in the morning before daylight—doubtless that they might the better avoid the notice of their enemies.

3. They appear not to have had at this time any stated place of worship.

4. They worshipped Christ as God. The phrase, *carmen Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem*, may imply any short ascription of praise to Christ—a doxology, a prayer, a psalm, or hymn, in prose or verse, though the latter is most probable. Christ was the object of worship, to whom they offered this doxology or prayer, rehearsing it alternately or in responses.

It appears from this passage that these Christians were not only acquainted with the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, but manifested great boldness in asserting it.

5. They celebrated the Lord’s Supper and their love-feasts in

these assemblies. This is implied in their binding themselves by a solemn oath not to commit sin, and in their coming together to take bread, "ad capiendum cibum promiscuum tamen et innoxium." These religious rites appear also to have been accompanied with the reading and exposition of the Scriptures. It seems to be included in these solemnities, though it is not distinctly mentioned.

6. This epistle bears honourable testimony to unflinching steadfastness of faith in these Christians, which Pliny styles an absurd and excessive superstition.

7. This epistle affords a striking proof of the early and extensive propagation of Christianity, and of its tendency to overthrow idolatry. It also confirms the statements of the early apologists respecting the same points, while it establishes our confidence in their statements where we have not, as in this case, the testimony of contemporary writers.¹

Lucian of Samosata travelled in Syria, Asia Minor, Italy, and France, and had the best means of becoming acquainted with the Christians who had already become numerous in those countries. From his frequent and reproachful mention of the Christians of his day,² we may collect the following particulars:—

1. He speaks of the followers of Christ by their appropriate name, Christians, though in speaking of them he usually employs some reproachful epithet.

2. He speaks of the author of this religion as one who lived in Palestine, and was crucified. He styles him a great man, and says that his followers reverence him as their lawgiver.

3. He denominates their religious teachers prophets, masters of the synagogue, and rulers.

4. He, in common with many of the fathers, calls their rites of worship *new mysteries*.

5. He particularly mentions the fraternity of Christians, their denial of the gods of the Greeks, and their worshipping of him crucified.

¹ J. H. Boehmer, Dissertat. xii. juris eccles. antiqui ad Plinium Secundum et Tertulianum. Hal. 1729. 8.

² De Morte Perigrini opp. edit. Bipont. vol. viii. p. 272, seq.; Philopseudes, vol. vii. p. 266; Pseudomantis, vol. v. p. 63, seq.; Ch. G. Fr. Walch, Explicatio rerum christianarum apud Lucianum; Eichstadt, Lucianus num scriptis suis adjuvare religionem chr. voluerit. Jenæ, 1820. 4.

6. He records their readiness to relieve and to support those who were sick or in prison.

7. He mentions their *δεῖπνα ποικίλα*—their manifold meals, referring obviously to their *αγαρæ* and sacramental suppers—possibly to abuses similar to those which are reprovèd by the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 20–22.

8. It is observable, also, that Lucian makes mention of the sacred books of the Christians; and also,

9. Of their community of goods, as is described Acts iv. 32–37; and,

Finally, of certain prohibited articles—as by the Church at Jerusalem they were required to abstain from things strangled and from blood; all which evinces their piety and benevolence, and diligence in the Christian life.—*Coleman's Antiquities of the Christian Church.*

X.

DOCTRINE OF THE LOGOS AND THE HOLY TRINITY.

THE Messiahship and divine sonship of Jesus of Nazareth, first confessed by Peter in the name of all the apostles and the eye-witnesses of the divine glory of his person and his work, as the most sacred and precious fact of their experience, and after the resurrection adoringly acknowledged by the sceptical Thomas in that exclamation, “My Lord, and my God!”—is the foundation stone of the Christian Church;¹ and the denial of the mystery of the incarnation is the mark of Antichristian heresy.² The whole theological energy of the ante-Nicene period concentrated itself, therefore, upon the doctrine of Christ as the God-man and Redeemer of the world. This doctrine was the kernel of all the creeds used in the initiatory sacrament of baptism, and was stamped upon the entire life, constitution, and worship of the early Church. It was not only expressly asserted by the fathers against heretics, but also professed by the Church in her daily worship, especially in the Holy Supper and the Easter festival,

¹ Matt. xvi. 16 sqq

² 1 John iv. 1-3.

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and sealed by the sufferings and death of numberless confessors and martyrs. Nay, life anticipated doctrine, and Christian experience contained more than divines could in clear words express. The divinity of Christ, and with this the divinity of the Holy Ghost, were from the first immovably fixed in the Christian mind. But the complete definition of this divinity, and of its relation to the Old Testament fundamental doctrine of the unity¹ of the divine essence—in a word, the Church dogma of the trinity—was the work of three centuries, and was fairly accomplished only in the Nicene age. In the first efforts of reason to grapple with these unfathomable mysteries, we must expect mistakes and inaccuracies of every kind. In the apostolic fathers we find for the most part only the simple biblical statements of the deity and humanity of Christ, in the practical form needed for general edification. Of those fathers Ignatius is most deeply imbued with the conviction, that the crucified Jesus is God incarnate, and indeed frequently calls him, without qualification, God. The development of Christology in the scientific doctrine of the Logos begins with Justin and culminates in Origen. From him then proceed two opposite modes of conception, the Athanasian and the Arian ; of which the former at last triumphs in the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, and confirms its victory in the Council of Constantinople, 381.

1. The dogma of the *divinity* of Christ is the centre of interest. It comes into the foreground, not only against rationalistic Monarchianism and Ebionism, which degrade Christ to a second Moses, but also against Gnosticism, which, though it holds him to be superhuman, still puts him on a level with other aeons of the ideal world, and thus, by endlessly multiplying sons of God, after the manner of the heathen mythology, pantheistically dilutes and destroys all idea of a specific sonship. The development of this dogma started from the Old Testament idea of the word and the wisdom of God ; from the Jewish Platonism of Alexandria ; above all, from the Christology of Paul, and from the Logos doctrine of John. This view of John gave a mighty impulse to Christian speculation, and furnished it ever fresh material. It was the form under which all the Greek fathers conceived the divine nature and divine dignity of Christ before his incarnation.

¹ Μοναρχία.

The term Logos was peculiarly serviceable here, from its well-known double meaning of "reason" and "word," ratio and oratio; though in John it is evidently used in the latter sense alone.

Following the suggestion of this double meaning, and the precedent of a similar distinction by Philo, Justin Martyr distinguishes in the Logos, that is, the divine being of Christ, two elements: the immanent, or that which determines the revelation of God to himself within himself;¹ and the transitive, in virtue of which God reveals himself outwardly.² The act of the procession of the Logos from God³ he illustrates by the figure of generation,⁴ without division or diminution of the divine substance; and in this view the Logos is the only and absolute Son of God, the only-begotten. The generation, however, is not with him an eternal act, grounded in metaphysical necessity, as with Athanasius and in the later Church doctrine. It took place at, or properly immediately before, the creation of the world, and proceeded from the free will of God. This begotten (but, it would seem, not ante-mundane) Logos he conceives as a hypostatical being, a person numerically distinct from the Father; and to the agency of this person before his incarnation⁵ Justin attributes the creation and support of the universe, all the theophanies (christophanies) of the Old Testament, and all that is true and rational in the heathen world. In his efforts to reconcile this view with monotheism, he at one time asserts the moral unity of the two divine persons, and at another decidedly subordinates the Son to the Father. Justin thus combines hypostasianism, or the theory of the independent, personal (hypostatical) divinity of Christ, with subordinatianism; he is, therefore, as Semisch in his monograph⁶ has conclusively proved, neither Arian nor Athanasian; but his whole theological tendency, in opposition to the heresies, was evidently towards the orthodox system, and had he lived later, he would have subscribed the Nicene Creed. The same may be said of Tertullian and of Origen.

The further development of the doctrine of the Logos we find in the other apologists, in Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, and especially in the Alexandrian school.

¹ Λόγος ἐνδιάθετος.² Λόγος προφορικός.³ Προέρχεσθαι.⁴ Γενῆναι, γενῆσθαι.⁵ Λόγος ἄσαρκος.⁶ Just. der Märtyr. II. 289 sqq.

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Clement of Alexandria speaks in the very highest terms of the Logos, but leaves his independent personality obscure. He makes the Logos the ultimate principle of all existence, without beginning and timeless; the revealer of the Father, the sum of all intelligence and wisdom, the personal truth, the speaking as well as the spoken word of creative power, the proper author of the world, the source of light and life, the great educator of the human race, at last becoming man, to draw us into fellowship with him, and make us partakers of his divine nature.

Origen felt the whole weight of the christological and trinitarian question, but obscured it by his foreign speculations, and wavered between the homoousian, or orthodox, and the subordinatian theories, which afterwards came into sharp conflict with each other in the Arian controversy. On the one hand he brings the Son as near as possible to the essence of the Father; not only making him the absolute personal wisdom, truth, righteousness, reason,¹ but also expressly predicating eternity of him, and propounding the Church dogma of the *eternal* generation of the Son. This generation he usually represents as proceeding from the will of the Father; but he also conceives it as proceeding from his essence; and hence, at least in one passage, in a fragment on the Epistle to the Hebrews, he already applies the term *ὁμοούσιος* to the Son, thus declaring him co-equal in substance with the Father. This idea of eternal generation, however, has a peculiar form in him, from its close connexion with his doctrine of an eternal creation. He can no more think of the Father without the Son, than of an almighty God without creation, or of light without radiance.² Hence he describes this generation not as a single, instantaneous act, but, like creation, ever going on.³ But on the other hand, he distinguishes the essence of the Son from that of the Father; speaks of a difference of substance;⁴ and makes the Son decidedly inferior to the Father, calling him, with reference to John i. 1, merely *θεός* without the article, that is, God in a relative sense (*Deus de Deo*), also *δεύτερος θεός*, but the Father

¹ *Ἀυτοσοφία, αὐτοαλήθεια, αὐτοδικαιοσύνη, αὐτοδύναμις, αὐτόλογος, &c.*

² *De princip. IV. 28: Sicut lux nunquam sine splendore esse potuit, ita nec Filius quidem sine Patre intelligi potest.*

³ I. 2, 4: *Est aeterna et sempiterna generatio, sicut splendor generatur a luce.* Hom. in Jerem. IX. 4: *Ἀεὶ γεννᾷ ὁ Πατήρ τὸν Υἱόν.*

⁴ *Ἐπέρτης τῆς οὐσίας ἢ τοῦ ὑποκειμένου*, which the advocates of his orthodoxy take as merely opposing the Patripassian conception of the *ὁμοουσία*.

God in the absolute sense, ὁ θεός (Deus per se), or αὐτόθεος, also the fountain and root of the divinity.¹ Hence he also taught, that the Son should not be directly addressed in prayer, but the Father through the Son in the Holy Ghost. This must be limited, no doubt, to absolute worship, for he elsewhere recognises prayer to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.² Yet this subordination of the Son formed a stepping-stone to Arianism, and some disciples of Origen, particularly Dionysius of Alexandria, decidedly approached that heresy. Against this, however, the deeper Christian sentiment, even before the Arian controversy, put forth a firm protest, especially in the person of the Roman Dionysius, to whom his Alexandrian namesake and colleague magnanimously yielded.

In a simpler way the western fathers, including here Irenæus and Hippolytus, who laboured in the west, though they were of Greek training, reached the position, that Christ must be one with the Father, yet personally distinct from him. It is commonly supposed that they came nearer the homousion than the Greeks. This can be said of Irenæus, but not of Tertullian. And as to Cyprian, whose sphere was exclusively that of Church government and discipline, he had nothing peculiar in his speculative doctrines.

Irenæus, after Polycarp the most faithful representative of the Johannean school, keeps more within the limits of the simple biblical statements, and ventures no such bold speculations as the Alexandrians, but is more sound and much nearer the Nicene standard. He likewise uses the terms Logos and Son of God interchangeably, and concedes the distinction, made also by the Valentinians, between the inward and the uttered word,³ in reference to man, but contests the application of it to God, who is above all antitheses, absolutely simple and unchangeable, and in whom before and after, thinking and speaking, coincide. He repudiates also every speculative or *a priori* attempt to explain the derivation of the Son from the Father; this he holds to be an incomprehensible mystery.⁴ He is content to define the actual

¹ Πηγή, ῥίζα τῆς θεότητος.

² For example, Ad. Rom. I. p. 472: *Adorare alium quempiam praeter Patrem et Filium et Spiritum sanctum, impietatis est crimen.*

³ The λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and λ. προφορικός.

⁴ Adv. haer. II. 28, 6: *Si quis nobis dixerit: quomodo ergo Filius prolatus a Patre est? dicimus ei—nemo novit, nisi solus, qui generavit Pater et qui natus est Filius.*

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distinction between Father and Son, by saying that the former is God revealing himself, the latter, God revealed; the one is the ground of revelation, the other is the actual, appearing revelation itself. Hence he calls the Father the invisible of the Son, and the Son the visible of the Father. He discriminates most rigidly the conceptions of generation and of creation. The Son, though begotten of the Father, is still, like him, distinguished from the created world, as increate, without beginning, and eternal. All plainly showing, that Irenæus is much nearer the Nicene dogma of the substantial identity of the Son with the Father, than Justin and the Alexandrians. If, as he does in several passages, he still subordinates the Son to the Father, he is certainly inconsistent; and that for want of an accurate distinction between the eternal Logos and the actual Christ.¹ Expressions like, "My Father is greater than I," which apply only to the Christ of history, he refers also, like Justin and Origen, to the eternal Word. On the other hand, he has been charged with leaning in the opposite direction towards the Sabellian and Patripassian views, but unjustly.² Apart from his frequent want of precision in expression, he steers in general, with sure biblical and churchly tact, equally clear of both extremes, and asserts alike the essential unity and the eternal personal distinction of the Father and the Son. The incarnation of the Logos he ably discusses, viewing it both as a restoration and redemption from sin and death, and as the completion of the revelation of God and of the creation of man. In the latter view, as finisher, Christ is the perfect Son of Man, in whom the likeness of man to God, the *similitudo Dei*, regarded as moral duty, in distinction from the *imago Dei*, as an essential property, becomes for the first time fully real. According to this the incarnation would be grounded in the original plan of God for the education of mankind, and independent of the fall; it would have taken place even without the fall, though in some other form. Yet Irenæus does not expressly say this; speculation on abstract possibilities was foreign to his realistic cast of mind.

¹ The *λόγος ἄσαρκος*, and the *λόγος ἐνσαρκος*.

² As Duncker in his monograph: *Die Christologie des heil. Irenäus* p. 50 sqq., has unanswerably shown.

Tertullian cannot escape the charge of subordinatianism. He bluntly calls the Father the whole divine substance, and the Son a part of it;¹ illustrating their relation by the figures of the fountain and the stream, the sun and the beam. He would not have two suns, he says, but he might call Christ God, as Paul does in Rom. ix. 5. The sunbeam, too, in itself considered, may be called sun, but not the sun a beam. Sun and beam are two distinct things (species) in one essence (substantia), as God and the Word, as the Father and the Son. But we should not take figurative language too strictly, and must remember that Tertullian was specially interested to distinguish the Son from the Father in opposition to the Patripassian Praxeas. In other respects he did the Church Christology material service. He propounds a threefold hypostatical existence of the Son (filiatio): (1) The pre-existent, eternal immanence of the Son in the Father; they being as inseparable as reason and word in man, who was created in the image of God, and hence in a measure reflects his being;² (2) the coming forth of the Son with the Father for the purpose of the creation; (3) the manifestation of the Son in the world by the incarnation.

With equal energy Hippolytus combated Patripassianism, and insisted on the recognition of different hypostases with equal claim to divine worship. Yet he, too, is somewhat trammelled with the subordinatian view.

On the other hand, according to his representation in the Homologoumena, the Roman bishops Zephyrinus, and especially Callistus, favoured Patripassianism. The later popes, however, were firm defenders of hypostasianism. One of them, Dionysius, A.D. 262, as we shall see more fully when speaking of the trinity, maintained at once the homoousion and eternal generation against Dionysius of Alexandria, and the hypostatical distinction against Sabellianism, and sketched in bold and clear outlines the Nicene standard view.

2. Passing now to the doctrine of the Saviour's *humanity*, we find this asserted by Ignatius as clearly and forcibly as his divi-

¹ Adv. Prax. c. 9: Pater tota substantia est, Filius vero derivatio totius et portio, sicut ipse profitetur: Quia Pater major Me est (John xiv. 28).

² Hence he says (Adv. Prax. c. 5), by way of illustration: Quodcumque cogitaveris, sermo est; quodcumque senseris ratio est. Loquaris illud in animo necesse est, et dum loqueris, conlocutorem pateris sermonem, in quo inest hæc ipsa ratio qua cum eo cogitans loquaris, per quom loquens cogitas.

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nity. Of the Gnostic Docetists of his day, who made Christ a spectre, he says, they are bodiless spectres themselves, whom we should fear as wild beasts in human shape, because they tear away the foundation of our hope.¹ He attaches great importance to the flesh, that is, the full reality of the human nature of Christ, his true birth from the virgin, and his crucifixion under Pontius Pilate; he calls him God incarnate;² therefore is his death the fountain of life.

Irenæus refutes Docetism at length. Christ, he contends against the Gnostics, must be man, like us, if he would redeem us from corruption and make us perfect. As sin and death came into the world by a man, so they could be blotted out legitimately and to our advantage only by a man; though of course not by one who should be a mere descendant of Adam, and thus himself in need of redemption, but by a second Adam, supernaturally begotten, a new progenitor of our race, as divine as he is human. A new birth unto life must take the place of the old birth unto death. As the completer, also, Christ must enter into fellowship with us, to be our teacher and pattern. He made himself equal with man, that man, by his likeness to the Son, might become precious in the Father's sight. Irenæus conceived the humanity of Christ not as mere corporeality, though he often contends for this alone against the Gnostics, but as true humanity, embracing body, soul, and spirit. He places Christ in the same relation to the regenerate race, which Adam bears to the natural, and regards him as the absolute, universal man, the prototype and summing up³ of the whole race. Connected with this is his beautiful thought, found also in Hippolytus in the tenth book of the *Philosophoumena*, that Christ made the circuit of all the stages of human life, to redeem and sanctify all. To apply this to advanced age, he singularly extended the life of Jesus to fifty years, and endeavoured to prove his view from the gospels against the Valentinians. The full communion of Christ with men involved his participation in all their evils and sufferings, his death, and his descent into the abode of the dead.

¹ Ep. ad Smyrn. c. 2-5.

² *Ἐν σαρκὶ γενόμενος θεός* (ad Ephes. c. 7); also *ἔνωσις σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος*. Comp. Rom. i. 3, 4, ix. 5; 1 John iv. 1-3.

³ *Ἀνακεφαλαίωσις*, recapitulatio, a term frequently used by Irenæus. Comp. Rom. xiii. 1; Eph. i. 10.

Tertullian advocates the entire yet sinless humanity of Christ against both the Docetistic Gnostics¹ and the Patripassians.² He accuses the former of making Christ, who is all truth, a half lie, and by the denial of his flesh resolving all his work in the flesh, his sufferings and his death, into an empty show, and subverting the whole scheme of redemption. Against the Patripassians he argues, that God the Father is incapable of suffering, and is beyond the sphere of finiteness and change. In the humanity, he expressly includes the soul; and this, in his view, comprises the reason also; for he adopts not the trichotomic, but the dycho-tomic division. The body of Christ, before the exaltation, he conceived to have been even ugly. This singular view, quite common in the early age of the Church, and founded on a mis-apprehension of Isa. liii. 2, where the Messiah is figuratively said to have "no form nor comeliness," is connected with the aversion of the ancient Church to art and earthly splendour, and with her servant-form in the period of persecution.

Clement of Alexandria likewise adopted the notion of the uncomely personal appearance of Jesus, but compensated it with the thought of the moral beauty of his soul. In his effort, however, to idealize the body of the Lord, and raise it above all sensual desires and wants, he almost reaches Gnostic Docetism.

The Christology of Origen is more fully developed in this part, as well as in the article of the divine nature, and peculiarly modified by his Platonizing view of the pre-existence and pre-Adamic fall of souls, and their confinement in the prison of corporeity; but it is likewise too idealistic, and inclined to substitute the superhuman for the purely human. He conceives the incarnation as a gradual process, and distinguishes two stages in it—the assumption of the soul, and the assumption of the body. The Logos, before the creation of this world—nay, from the beginning, took to himself a human soul, which had no part in the ante-mundane apostasy, but clave to the Logos in perfect love, and was warmed through by him, as iron by fire. Then this fair soul, married to the Logos, took from the Virgin Mary a true body, yet without sin; not by way of punishment, like the fallen souls, but from love to men, to effect their redemption. Again,

¹ Adv. Marcionem, and De Carne Christi.

² Adv. Præxeram.

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Origen distinguishes various forms of the manifestation of this human nature, in which the Lord became all things to all men, to gain all. To the great mass he appeared in the form of a servant; to his confidential disciples and persons of culture, in a radiance of the highest beauty and glory, such as, even before the resurrection, broke forth from his miracles and in the transfiguration on Mount Tabor. In connection with this comes Origen's view of a gradual spiritualization and deification of the body of Christ, even to the ubiquity which he ascribes to it in its exalted state. On this insufficient ground his opponents charged him with teaching a double Christ (answering to the lower Jesus and the higher Soter of the Gnostics), and a merely temporary validity in the corporeity of the Redeemer. He is the first to apply to Christ the term God-man,¹ which leads to the true view of the relation of the two natures.

3. The doctrine of the *mutual relation* of the divine and the human in Christ did not come into special discussion nor reach a definite settlement until the Christological controversies of the fifth century. Yet Irenæus, in several passages, throws out important hints. He teaches unequivocally a true and indissoluble union of divinity and humanity in Christ, and repels the Gnostic idea of a mere external and transient connection of the divine Soter with the human Jesus. The foundation for that union he perceives in the creation of the world by the Logos, and in man's original likeness to God and destination for permanent fellowship with him. In the act of union, that is, in the supernatural generation and birth, the divine is the active principle, and the seat of personality; the human, the passive or receptive; as, in general, man is absolutely dependent on God, and is the vessel to receive the revelations of his wisdom and love. The medium and bond of the union is the Holy Ghost, who took the place of the masculine agent in the generation, and overshadowed the virgin womb of Mary with the power of the Highest. In this connection he calls Mary the counterpart of Eve, the "mother of all living" in a higher sense; who, by her believing obedience, became the cause of salvation both to herself and to the whole human race,² as Eve by her disobedience induced the apostasy

¹ Θεάνθρωπος.

² Et sibi et universo generi humano causa facta est salutis. (Adv. haer. III. 22, § 4).

and death of mankind;—a fruitful parallel, which was afterwards frequently pushed too far, and turned, no doubt, contrary to its original sense, to favour the idolatrous worship of the blessed Virgin. Irenæus seems¹ to conceive the incarnation as progressive, the two factors reaching absolute communion (but neither absorbing the other) in the ascension; though before this, at every stage of life, Christ was a perfect man, presenting the model of every age.

Origen, the author of the term “God-man,” was also the first to employ the figure, since become so classical, of an iron warmed through by fire, to illustrate the pervasion of the human nature (primarily the soul) by the divine in the person of Christ.—*Schaff*.

XI.

DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY BEFORE THE COUNCIL OF NICÆA.

THE chief form of heretical teaching on the subject of the Divine nature during this period was that of Monarchianism, or the doctrine of the absolute unity of God, alike in essence and in personal subsistence. There is, it was maintained, but one God and one Person in the Godhead—the eternal Father and primal source of being, from whom all other essences and persons, however exalted, take their origin. If Christ, therefore, was regarded as a divine person, it could only be in a certain vague and improper sense, as of one in whom a divine power wrought or a divine Presence dwelt. Some took the one view, and others the other, and have hence been distinguished respectively into Dynamistic and Modalistic Monarchians. The one, following the example of the Ebionites, regarded Christ as a mere man, who, like the prophets, had been endowed with divine wisdom and power, only in infinitely higher measure; the other held that the whole fulness of the Deity dwelt in Christ, and only found in him a peculiar mode of manifestation. The latter view, as identifying the Divine Word with the Eternal Father, seemed to draw along with it the start-

¹ At least according to Dorner, *Christology*, I. 495.

ling inference that the Father himself had died on the cross ; and its supporters were in consequence stigmatized by the orthodox as *Patripassians*.

In opposition to the whole system of Monarchianism in both its forms, the Orthodox Church maintained the true and proper divinity of the Son on the one hand, and his distinct personality on the other. He was one with the Father as God, and yet distinct from the Father as the Son. He was God of God, very God of very God, begotten, not made, in the apprehension of the Church in this age, as much as in any after age. As yet, however, the systematic development and definition of the doctrine was in some measure immature ; and it is especially important, in judging of the theological discussions of the time, to keep in mind the following points :—

(1.) The words *ὄσια* and *ὁμοουσία*, on which the controversies of the next age so largely turned, had not yet assumed an absolutely fixed and definite sense, being sometimes used in reference to the divine essence, and sometimes to the divine personality. Hence Origen, while upholding the proper divinity and eternal generation of the Son, ascribed to him a certain *ἐτερότης τῆς οὐσίας* from the Father, and rejected the term *ὁμοουσιος* as a proper definition of the relation existing between them.

2. The notion of a certain subordination of the Son to the Father, as inherent in the essential relation existing between them, which was then generally prevalent, tended somewhat to obscure the conception of the co-equal and co-essential glory of the Son with the Father, and gave rise to occasional expressions which afforded some apparent countenance to the Arianism of the next age.

3. The doctrine of the distinct personality of the Holy Ghost had not yet come into formal discussion, and accordingly remained in great measure in the shade.

The following tabular synopsis will afford a more distinct view of the whole state of opinion and controversy in regard to the subject during the ante-Nicene age :—

I.

THE MONARCHIANS.

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| DYNAMISTIC. | { | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The <i>Alogi</i> of Asia Minor, so called on account of their denying the distinct divine personality of the Logos. 2. The <i>Theodotians</i>, followers of Theodotus, who taught <i>ψαλὸν ἄνθρωπον εἶναι τὸν Χριστὸν</i>; excommunicated at Rome by Victor. 3. <i>Artemon</i> and his adherents, condemned and excommunicated by Zephyrinus. 4. <i>Paul</i> of Samosata, who maintained another phase of the same opinion, and was condemned in a Syrian Synod A.D. 269. | APPEN-
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| MODALISTIC
(OR PATRI-
PASSIAN). | { | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Praxeas</i>, a confessor from Asia Minor, propounded his Patripassian views at Rome about A.D. 190; refuted by Tertullian. 2. <i>Noëtus</i> of Smyrna, similarly tinged with Patripassian error. His doctrine was brought to Rome about 215 by <i>Epigonus</i>, and espoused by <i>Cleomenes</i>—partly supported, as containing some elements of truth, by the Bishop Callistus, who is hence denounced by Hippolytus as a Noetian and a heretic. 3. <i>Beryllus</i>, of Bostra, denied the <i>ἰδία θεότης</i> of the divinity of Christ, and defined it as a <i>πατρικὴ θεότης</i>, and regarded it as a new form of manifestation on the part of God (<i>πρόσωπον</i>)—thus verging on Sabellianism. He was confuted and convinced of his error by Origen, in an Arabian Synod, A.D. 244. 4. <i>Sabellius</i> maintained a Trinity, not of divine persons, but of successive manifestations, under the names (<i>ονόματα, πρόσωπα</i>) of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In his system the temporal <i>πρόσωπα</i> took the place of the eternal and essential <i>ὑπόστασεις</i> of the orthodox faith, and their successive manifestation was designated as a process of expansion (<i>ἐκτασις</i>) and contraction (<i>συστολή, πλατυσμός</i>). | |

II.

THE ORTHODOX

Maintained the proper divinity and distinct personal subsistence of the Son, and (though less prominently insisted on) of the Holy Ghost; obscured somewhat by subordination views.

In general, it may be said that the Monarchians of this age gave prominence to the unity of the Divine essence; the orthodox to the distinction of Persons. It was the work of the succeeding period to combine both in the homoousian hypostasianism, or Trinity in Unity, of the Athanasian faith.

XII.

NEO-PLATONISM.

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THIS system presents the last phase—the evening red, so to speak—of the Grecian philosophy; a fruitless effort of dying heathenism to revive itself against the irresistible progress of Christianity in its freshness and vigour. It was a pantheistic eclecticism and a philosophico-religious syncretism, which sought to reconcile Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy with Oriental religion and theosophy, polytheism with monotheism, superstition with culture, and to hold, as with convulsive grasp, the old popular faith in a refined and idealized form. Some scattered Christian ideas also were unconsciously let in; Christianity already filled the atmosphere of the age too much to be wholly shut out. As might be expected, this compound of philosophy and religion was an extravagant, fantastic, heterogeneous affair, like its contemporary, Gnosticism, which differed from it by formally recognising Christianity in its syncretism. Most of the Neo-Platonists—Janblichus in particular—were as much hierophants and theurgists as philosophers, devoted themselves to divination and magic, and boasted of divine inspirations and visions. Their literature is not an original, healthy, natural product, but an abnormal after-growth.

In a time of inward distraction and dissolution, the human mind hunts up old and obsolete systems and notions, or resorts to magical and theurgic arts. Superstition follows on the heels of unbelief, and atheism often stands closely connected with the fear of ghosts and the worship of demons. The enlightened emperor Augustus was troubled if he put on his left shoe first in the morning, instead of the right; and the accomplished elder Pliny wore amulets as a protection from thunder and lightning. In their day, the long-forgotten Pythagoreanism was conjured from the grave and idealized. Sorcerers like Simon Magus, Elymas, Alexander of Abonoteichos, and Apollonius of Tyana († A.D. 86), found great favour even with the higher classes, who laughed at the fables of the gods. Men turned wistfully to the past, especially to the mysterious East, the land of primitive wisdom and

religion. The Syrian cultus was sought out, and all sorts of religions, all the sense and all the nonsense of antiquity, found a rendezvous in Rome. Even a succession of Roman emperors, from Septimius Severus, at the close of the second century, to Alexander Severus, embraced this religious syncretism, which, instead of supporting the old Roman state religion, helped to undermine it.

After the beginning of the third century, this tendency found philosophical expression and took a reformatory turn in Neo-Platonism. The magic power which was thought able to re-animate all these various elements and reduce them to harmony, and to put deep meaning into the old mythology, was the philosophy of the divine Plato; which, in truth, possessed essentially a mystical character, and was used also by learned Jews, like Philo, and by Christians, like Origen, in their idealizing efforts and their arbitrary allegorical expositions of offensive passages of the Bible. In this view, we may find among heathen writers a sort of forerunner of the Neo-Platonists in the pious and noble-minded Platonist, Plutarch of Boeotia († 129), who likewise saw a deeper sense in the myths of the popular polytheistic faith, and in general, in his comparative biographies and his admirable moral treatises, looks at the fairest and noblest side of the Græco-Roman antiquity, but often wanders off into the trackless regions of fancy.

The proper founder of Neo-Platonism was Ammonius Saccas of Alexandria, who was born of Christian parents, but apostatized, and died in the year 243. His more distinguished pupil, Plotinus, also an Egyptian († 270), developed the Neo-Platonic ideas in systematic form, and gave them firm foot-hold and wide currency, particularly in Rome, where he taught philosophy. The system was propagated by his pupil, Porphyry of Tyre († 304), who likewise taught in Rome; by Jamblichus of Chalcis, in Coelo-Syria († 333); and by Proclus of Constantinople († 485). It supplanted the popular religion among the educated classes of later heathendom, and held its ground until the end of the fifth century, when it perished of its own internal falsehood and contradictions.

From its affinity for the ideal, the supernatural, and the mystical, this system, like the original Platonism, might become for many philosophical minds a bridge to faith; and so it was even

to Augustine, whom it delivered from the bondage of scepticism, and filled with a burning thirst for truth and wisdom. But it could also work against Christianity. Neo-Platonism was, in fact, a direct attempt of the more intelligent and earnest heathenism to rally all its nobler energies, especially the forces of Hellenic philosophy and Oriental mysticism, and to found a universal religion, a pagan counterpart to the Christian. Plotinus, in his opposition to Gnosticism, assailed also, though not expressly, the Christian element it contained. On their syncretistic principles, the Neo-Platonists could indeed reverence Christ as a great sage and a hero of virtue, but not as the Son of God. They ranked the wise men of heathendom with him. The emperor Alexander Severus gave Orpheus and Apollonius of Tyana a place in his lararium by the side of the bust of Jesus; and the rhetorician Philostratus, about the year 230, idealized the life of the pagan magician and soothsayer Apollonius, and made him out a religious reformer and worker of miracles. With the same secret polemical aim, Porphyry and Jamblichus embellished the life of Pythagoras, and set him forth as the highest model of wisdom—even a divine being incarnate, a Christ of heathenism.

One of the Neo-Platonists, however, made also a direct attack upon Christianity, and was, in the eyes of the Church fathers, its bitterest and most dangerous enemy. Towards the end of the third century, Porphyry wrote an extended work against the Christians, in fifteen books, which called forth numerous refutations from the most eminent Church teachers of the time; particularly from Methodius of Tyre, Eusebius of Cæsarea, and Apollinaris of Laodicea. In 435 all the copies were burned by order of the emperor, and we know the work now only from fragments in the Fathers. According to these specimens, Porphyry attacked especially the sacred books of the Christians with more knowledge than Celsus. He endeavoured, with keen criticism, to point out the contradictions between the Old Testament and the New, and among the apostles themselves; and thus to refute the divinity of their writings. He represented the prophecies of Daniel as *vaticinia post eventum*, and censured the allegorical interpretation of Origen, by which transcendental mysteries were foisted into the writings of Moses, contrary to their clear sense. He took advantage, above all, of the collision between Paul and

Peter at Antioch,¹ to reproach the former with a contentious spirit, the latter with error; and to infer from the whole, that the doctrine of such apostles must rest on lies and frauds. Even Jesus himself he charged with equivocation and inconsistency, on account of his conduct in John vii. 8, compared with verse 14.

Still Porphyry would not wholly reject Christianity. Like many rationalists of more recent times, he distinguished the original, pure doctrine of Jesus from the second-hand, adulterated doctrine of the apostles. In another work² he says, we must not calumniate Christ, but only pity those who worship him as God. "That pious soul, exalted to heaven, is become, by a sort of fate, an occasion of delusion to those souls from whom fortune withholds the gifts of the gods and the knowledge of the eternal Zeus." Still more remarkable in this view is a letter to his wife Marcella (which A. Mai published at Milan in 1816), in the unfounded opinion that Marcella was a Christian. In the course of this letter Porphyry remarks that what is born of the flesh is flesh; that by faith, love, and hope we raise ourselves to the Deity; that evil is the fault of man; that God is holy; that the most acceptable sacrifice to him is a pure heart; that the wise man is at once a temple of God and a priest in that temple. For these and other such evidently Christian ideas and phrases he no doubt had a sense of his own, which materially differed from their proper scriptural meaning. But such things show how Christianity in that day exerted, even upon its opponents, a power to which heathenism was forced to yield an unwilling assent.

The last literary antagonist of Christianity in our period is Hierocles, who while governor of Bithynia, and afterwards of Alexandria, under Dioclesian, persecuted that religion also with the sword, and exposed Christian maidens to a worse fate than death. His "Truth-loving Words to the Christians" has been destroyed, like Porphyry's work, by the mistaken zeal of the later emperors, and is known to us only through the answer of Eusebius of Caesarea. It appears to have merely repeated the objections of Celsus and Porphyry, and to have drawn a comparison between Christ and Apollonius of Tyana, which resulted in favour of the latter. The Christians, says he, consider Jesus a God on account of some insignificant miracles, falsely coloured up by his

¹ Gal. ii. 11, sqq.

² Περὶ τῆς ἐκ λογίων φιλοσοφίας.

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apostles ; but the heathens far more justly declare the greater wonder-worker Apollonius, as well as an Aristeas and a Pythagoras, simply a favourite of the gods and a benefactor of men.—*Schaff.*

XIII.

THE EASTER QUESTION.

1. DISPUTES ABOUT THE OBSERVANCE OF EASTER (comp. *K. L. Weitzel*, d. Gesch. d. Passahfeier d. 3 erst. Jahrh. [Hist. of Easter-observ. during the First 3 Cent.] Pforzh. 1848). During the second century Easter was celebrated on three different principles. The *Judæo-Christian Ebionites* (§ 48, 2) observed the Paschal Supper on the 14th of Nisan (= ἡ ἰδ', i. e. = 14), and considered that in this respect an exact adherence to Old Testament customs was of chief importance, especially since Christ, who had died on the 15th, had on the 14th kept the Paschal Supper with his disciples. The *Jewish Christians* who were connected with the *Catholic Church*, and whose practice was adopted in Asia Minor generally, celebrated Easter at exactly the same time as the Jews ; but they put a Christian interpretation upon the feast, omitted the Paschal Supper, and declared that the remembrance of the death of Christ was the point of chief importance. In their opinion, Christ had died on the 14th Nisan ; so that, in the strict sense, he had not celebrated the real Paschal Supper in the last year of his life. Hence they observed on the 14th Nisan their *πάσχα σταυρώσιμον*, and on the 16th the *πάσχα ἀναστάσιμον*. The fast before Easter closed at the moment when Christ was supposed to have expired (at 3 o'clock in the afternoon), and was followed by an agape and the Lord's Supper, instead of the Jewish Paschal Supper. Different from these two Judaizing observances was that in use among the Gentile Christians of the West, which, both in substance and in form, had no connection with the Jewish Paschal feast. In order not to destroy the harmony with the observance of the day of the resurrection on the Lord's day, it was resolved to retain not only the annual return of the ἰδ', but also to celebrate it on the same days of the week. Hence, when the ἰδ

did not happen on the Friday, the *πάσχα σταυρώσιμον* was always celebrated on the first *Friday* after the *ιδ'*, and the *πάσχα ἀναστάσιμον* on the *Lord's day* following. Besides, the Western Churches observed the anniversary of Christ's death as a day of mourning, and the fast before Easter only terminated with an agape and the Lord's Supper on the day of the resurrection. For a considerable period these different customs of observing Easter continued without calling forth any controversy. The subject was first discussed during the stay of *Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna*, at Rome (160). *Anicetus*, Bishop of Rome, supported his mode of celebrating Easter by the tradition of the Roman Church, while *Polycarp* appealed to the circumstance that he had sat down at a Paschal feast with the Apostle John himself. Although an agreement was not arrived at, yet to give evidence of their entire ecclesiastical fellowship, *Anicetus* allowed *Polycarp* to administer the Lord's Supper in his church. But in the year 196 the discussion broke out afresh between *Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus*, and *Victor, Bishop of Rome*. The latter went so far as to wish for a cessation of ecclesiastical communion with the Churches of Asia Minor. But this step was generally disapproved. Especially did *Irenæus*, in name of the Gallican bishops, pronounce in this respect against *Victor*. The general *Council of Nice* (325) decided in favour of the Roman observance, which, after that period, became that in common practice.—*Kurtz*.

XIV.

THE RISE OF MONASTICISM AND CELIBACY.

THE ground on which poverty and celibacy were so strongly urged is easily understood. Property, which is so closely allied to the selfishness of man and binds him to the earth; and sexual intercourse, which brings out sensual passion in its greatest strength, and which nature herself covers with the veil of modesty;—these present themselves as the firmest obstacles to that perfection, in which God alone is our possession, and Christ alone our love and delight.

In these things the ancient heretics went to the extreme. The

Ebionites made poverty the condition of salvation. The Gnostics, as already remarked, were divided between the two excesses of absolute self-denial and unbridled self-indulgence. The Marcionites, Carpocratians, Prodicians, false Basilidians, and Manichaeans objected to individual property, from hatred to the material world; and Epiphanes, in a book "on Justice" about 125, defined virtue as a community with equality, and advocated the community of goods and women. The more earnest of these heretics entirely prohibited marriage and procreation as a diabolical work, as in the case of Saturninus, Marcion, and the Encratites; while other Gnostic sects substituted for it the most shameless promiscuous intercourse, as in Carpocrates, Epiphanes, and the Nicolaitans.

The ancient Church, on the contrary, held to the divine institution of property and marriage, and was content to recommend the voluntary renunciation of these intrinsically lawful pleasures to the select few, as means of attaining Christian perfection. She declared marriage holy, virginity more holy. But unquestionably even the Church fathers so exalted the higher holiness of virginity, as practically to neutralize, or at least seriously weaken, their assertion of the holiness of marriage. The Roman Church, in spite of the many Bible examples of married men of God from Abraham to Peter, can conceive no real holiness without celibacy, and therefore requires celibacy of its clergy without exception.

The recommendation of voluntary poverty was based on a literal interpretation of the Lord's advice to the rich young ruler, who had kept all the commandments from his youth up: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me."¹ To this were added the actual examples of the poverty of Christ and his apostles, and the community of goods in the first Christian Church at Jerusalem. Many Christians, not of the ascetics only, but also of the clergy, like Cyprian, accordingly gave up all their property at their conversion, for the benefit of the poor. The later monastic societies sought to represent in their community of goods the original equality and the perfect brotherhood of men. Yet, on the other hand, Clement of Alexandria,

¹ Matt. xix. 21.

for example, in a special treatise on the right use of wealth,¹ observes, that the Saviour forbade not so much the possession of earthly property, as the love of it and desire for it; and that it is possible to retain the latter, even though the possession itself be renounced. The earthly, says he, is a material and a means for doing good, and the unequal distribution of property is a divine provision for the exercise of Christian love and beneficence. The true riches are the virtue, which can and should maintain itself under all outward conditions; the false are the mere outward possession, which comes and goes.

The old Catholic exaggeration of celibacy attached itself to four passages of Scripture, viz., Matt. xix. 12; xxii. 30; 1 Cor. vii. 7 sqq.; and Rev. xiv. 4; but it went far beyond them, and unconsciously admitted influences from foreign modes of thought. The words of the Lord in Matt. xxii. 30, Luke xx. 35 sq., were most frequently cited; but they expressly limit unmarried life to the angels, without setting it up as the model for men. Rev. xiv. 4 was taken by some of the fathers more correctly in the symbolical sense of freedom from the pollution of idolatry. The example of Christ, though often urged, cannot here furnish a rule; for the Son of God and Saviour of the world, was too far above all the daughters of Eve, to find an equal companion among them, and in any case cannot be conceived as holding such relations. The whole Church of the redeemed is his pure bride. Of the apostles some at least were married, and among them Peter, the oldest and most prominent of all. The advice of Paul in 1 Cor. vii. is so cautiously given, that even here the view of the fathers found but partial support; especially if balanced with the Pastoral Epistles, where monogamy is presented as the proper condition for the clergy. Nevertheless he was frequently made the apologist of celibacy by orthodox and heretical writers.² Judaism—with the exception of the paganizing Essenes, who abstained from marriage—highly honours the family life; it allows marriage even

¹ Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος πλούσιος.

² Thus, for example, in the rather worthless apocryphal *Acta Pauli et Theclae*, which are first mentioned by Tertullian (*De baptismo* c. 17, as the production of a certain Asiatic presbyter), and must therefore have existed in the second century. There Paul is made to say: Μακάριοι οἱ ἐγκρατεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοῖς λαλήσει ὁ θεός . . . μακάριοι οἱ ἔχοντες γυναῖκας ὡς μὴ ἔχοντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσι τὸν θεόν . . . μακάριοι τὰ σώματα τῶν παρθένων, ὅτι αὐτὰ εὐαρεστήσουσιν τῷ Θεῷ καὶ οὐκ ἀπολεσουσιν τὸν μισθὸν τῆς ἀγνείας αὐτῶν. See Tischendorf: *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*. Lips. 1851. p. 42 sq.

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to the priests and the high-priests, who had in fact to maintain their order by physical reproduction ; it considers unfruitfulness a disgrace or a curse. Heathenism, on the contrary, just because of its own degradation of woman, and its low, sensual conception of marriage, frequently includes celibacy in its ideal of morality, and associates it with worship. The noblest form of heathen virginity appears in the six Vestal virgins in Rome, who, while girls of from six to ten years, were selected for the service of the pure goddess, and set to keep the holy fire burning on its altar ; but, after serving thirty years, were allowed to return to secular life and marry. The penalty for breaking their vow of chastity was to be buried alive in the *campus sceleratus*.

The ascetic depreciation of marriage is thus due, at least in part, to the influence of heathenism. But with this was associated the Christian enthusiasm for angelic purity in opposition to the horrible licentiousness of the Graeco-Roman world. It was long before Christianity raised woman and the family life to the purity and dignity which became them in the kingdom of God. In this view we may the more easily account for many expressions of the Church fathers respecting the female sex, and warnings against intercourse with women, which to us, in the present state of European and American civilization, sound perfectly coarse and unchristian. John of Damascus has collected in his *Parallels* such patristic expressions as these, "A woman is an evil." "A rich woman is a double evil." "A beautiful woman is a whited sepulchre." "Better is a man's wickedness than a woman's goodness." The men who could write so, must have forgotten the beautiful passages to the contrary in the proverbs of Solomon and Sirach ; they must have forgotten their own mothers.

The excessive regard for celibacy and the accompanying depreciation of marriage date from about the middle of the second century, and reach their height in the Nicene age.

Ignatius, in his epistle to Polycarp, expresses himself as yet very moderately : "If any one can remain in chastity of the flesh to the glory of the Lord of the flesh (or, according to another reading, of the flesh of the Lord), let him remain thus without boasting ;¹ if he boast, he is lost ; and if it be made known, be-

¹ Ἐν ἀκαυχῆσι μινέτω.

yond the bishop,¹ he is ruined." What a stride from this to the obligatory celibacy of the clergy! Yet the admonition leads us to suppose that celibacy was thus early, in the beginning of the second century, in many cases boasted of as meritorious, and allowed to nourish spiritual pride. Ignatius is the first to call voluntary virgins brides of Christ and jewels of Christ.

Justin Martyr goes further. He points to many Christians of both sexes who lived to a great age unpolluted; and he desires celibacy to prevail to the greatest possible extent. He refers to the example of Christ, and expresses the singular opinion, that the Lord was born of a virgin only to put a limit to sensual desire, and to show that God could produce without the sexual agency of man. His disciple Tatian ran even to the Gnostic extreme upon this point, and, in a lost work on Christian perfection, condemned conjugal cohabitation as a fellowship of corruption destructive of prayer. At the same period Athenagoras wrote, in his Apology, "Many may be found among us, of both sexes, who grow old unmarried, full of hope that they are in this way more closely united to God."

Clement of Alexandria is the most reasonable of all the fathers in his views on this point. He considers eunuchism a special gift of divine grace, but without yielding it on this account preference above the married state. On the contrary, he vindicates with great decision the moral dignity and sanctity of marriage against the heretical extravagances of his time, and lays down the general principle, that Christianity stands not in outward observances, enjoyments, and privations, but in righteousness and peace of heart. Of the Gnostics he says, that, under the fair name of abstinence, they act impiously towards the creation and the holy Creator, and repudiate marriage and procreation on the ground that a man should not introduce others into the world to their misery, and provide new nourishment for death. He justly charges them with inconsistency in despising the ordinances of God and yet enjoying the nourishment created by the same hand, breathing his air, and abiding in his world. He rejects the appeal to the example of Christ, because Christ needed no help, and

¹ Εἶν γνωσθῆ πλὴν τοῦ ἐπισκόπου, according to the larger Greek recension, c. 5, with which the Syriac (c. 2) and Armenian versions agree. But the shorter Greek recension reads πλέον for πλὴν, which would give the sense: "If he think himself (on that account) above the (married) bishop: si majorem se episcopo censent."

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because the Church is his bride. The apostles also he cites against the impugners of marriage. Peter and Philip begot children ; Philip gave his daughters in marriage ; and even Paul hesitated not to speak of a female companion (rather only of his right to lead about such an one, as well as Peter). We seem translated into an entirely different Protestant atmosphere, when in this genial writer we read : The perfect Christian, who has the apostles for his patterns, proves himself truly a man in this, that he chooses not a solitary life, but marries, begets children, cares for the household, yet, under all the temptations which his care for wife and children, domestics and property presents, swerves not from his love to God, and as a Christian householder exhibits a miniature of the all-ruling Providence.

But how little such views agreed with the spirit of that age, we see in Clement's own stoical and Platonizing conception of the sensual appetites, and still more in his great disciple Origen, who voluntarily disabled himself in his youth, and could not think of the act of generation as anything but polluting. Hieracas, who also perhaps belonged to the Alexandrian school, is said to have carried his asceticism to a heretical extreme, and to have declared virginity a condition of salvation. Methodius was an opponent of the spiritualistic, but not of the ascetic Origen, and wrote an enthusiastic plea for virginity, founded on the idea of the Church as the pure, unspotted, ever young, and ever beautiful bride of God. Yet, quite remarkably, in his "Feast of the Ten Virgins," the virgins express themselves respecting the sexual relations with a minuteness which, to our modern taste, is extremely indelicate and offensive.

As to the Latin fathers : The views of Tertullian for and against marriage, particularly against second marriage, have been already noticed. His disciple Cyprian differs from him in his ascetic principles only by greater moderation in expression, and, in his treatise *De habitu virginum*, commends the unmarried life on the ground of Matt. xix. 12, 1 Cor. vii., and Rev. xiv. 4.

Celibacy was most common with pious virgins, who married themselves only to God or to Christ,¹ and in the spiritual delights of this heavenly union found abundant compensation for the pleasures of earthly matrimony. But cases were not rare where sensu-

¹ *Nuptæ Dea, Christo.*

ality, thus violently suppressed, asserted itself under other forms; as, for example, in indolence and ease at the expense of the Church, which Tertullian finds it necessary to censure; or, in the vanity and love of dress, which Cyprian rebukes; and, worst of all, in a venture of asceticism, which probably often enough resulted in failure, or at least filled the imagination with impure thoughts. Many of these heavenly brides¹ lived with male ascetics, and especially with unmarried clergymen, under pretext of a purely spiritual fellowship, in so intimate intercourse as to put their continence to the most perilous test, and wantonly challenge temptation, from which we should rather pray to be kept. This unnatural and shameless practice was probably introduced by the Gnostics; Irenæus at least charges it upon them. The first trace of it in the Church appears, though under a rather innocent allegorical form, in the Pastor Hermæ, which originated from the Roman Church.² It is next mentioned in the Pseudo-Clementine Epistles ad Virgines. In the third century it prevailed widely in the East and West. The worldly-minded Bishop Paulus of Antioch, favoured it by his own example. Cyprian of Carthage came out earnestly,³ and with all reason, against the vicious practice, in spite of the solemn protestation of innocence by these sorores, and their appeal to investigations through midwives. Several councils, at Elvira, Ancyra, Nice, &c., felt called upon to forbid this pseudo-ascetic scandal. Yet the intercourse of clergy with "mulieres subintroductæ" rather increased than diminished with the increasing stringency of the celibate laws, and has at all times more or less disgraced the Roman priesthood.

¹ Ἀδελφαί. sorores (1 Cor. ix. 5); afterwards cleverly called γυναῖκες συνείσακτοι, mulieres subintroductæ, extraneæ.

² Simil. IX. c. 11 (in Dressel, p. 627). The virgines, who doubtless symbolically represent the Christian graces (fides, abstinentia, potestas, patientia, simplicitas, innocentia, castitas, hilaritas, veritas, intelligentia, concordia, and caritas, comp. c. 15), there say to Hermas, when he proposes an evening walk: Οὐ δύνασαι ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἀναχωρῆσαι . . . Μεθ' ἡμῶν κοιμηθῆσθαι ὡς ἀδελφός, καὶ οὐχ' ὡς ἀνήρ· ἡμέτερος γὰρ ἀδελφός εἶ. Καὶ τοῦ λοιποῦ μέλλομεν μετὰ σοῦ κατοικεῖν, λίαν γὰρ σε ἀγαπῶμεν. Then the first of these virgins, fides, comes to the blushing Hermas, and begins to kiss him. The others do the same; they lead him to the tower (symbol of the Church), and sport with him. When night comes on, they retire together to rest, with singing and prayer; καὶ ἔμεινα, he continues, μετ' αὐτῶν τὴν νύκτα καὶ ἐκοιμήθην παρὰ τὸν πύργον. Ἐστρωσαν δὲ αἱ παρθένοι τοὺς λινοὺς χιτῶνας ἑαυτῶν χαμαί, καὶ ἐμὲ ἀνέκλιναν εἰς τὸ μέσον αὐτῶν, καὶ οὐδὲν ὅλως ἐποίησαν εἰ μὴ προσηύχοντο· κἀγὼ μετ' αὐτῶν ἀδιαλείπτως προσηυχόμην. It can hardly be conceived, that the apostolic Hermas wrote such silly stuff. It sounds much more like a later Hermas towards the middle of the second century. Comp. below, § 121.

³ Ep. LXII. also V. and VI.

CELIBACY OF THE CLERGY.

As the clergy were supposed to embody the moral ideal of Christianity, and to be in the full sense of the term the heritage of God,¹ they were required to practise especially rigid sexual temperance after receiving their ordination. The virginity of the Church of Christ, who was himself born of a virgin, seemed, in the ascetic spirit of the age, to demand a virgin priesthood. In the present period, however, this celibacy did not become a matter of law, but was left optional, like the vow of chastity among the laity. In the Pastoral Epistles of Paul a single marriage, if not expressly enjoined, is at least allowed to the presbyter-bishop, and is presumed to exist as the rule. The first step was the disapproval of *second* marriage; the passages, 1 Tim. iii. 2 and Tit. i. 6, being taken as a restriction, and as prohibiting successive polygamy. Yet, so late as the beginning of the third century, there were many clergymen in the Catholic Church who were married a second time. This appears from the accusation of Tertullian, who asks the Catholics, with Montanistic indignation: "Quot enim et bigami præsident apud vos, insultantes utique apostolo? . . . Digamus tinguis? digamus offers?" Second marriage thus seems to him to disqualify for the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. Hippolytus, in the *Philosophoumena*, reproaches the Roman bishop, Callistus, with admitting to sacerdotal and episcopal office those who were married the second and even the third time, and allowing the clergy to marry after having been ordained.

The next step was the disapproval of even one marriage for the clergy; but not yet the prohibition of it. The priesthood and marriage became more and more incompatible in the prevailing view. The Montanists shared in this feeling; among the oracles of the prophetess Prisca is one to the effect: "Only a holy (that is, an unmarried) minister can administer in holy things."² Even those fathers who were married, like the presbyter Tertullian and the Bishop Gregory of Nyssa, give decided preference to virginity. The Apostolical Constitutions and some provincial councils

¹ Κληρὸς θεοῦ.

² Tertull. De exhort. cast. c. 10: Sanctus minister sanctimoniam novit ministrare. That abstinence from all carnal intercourse is implied in the conception of sanctity, seems to follow from the connection.

accordingly prohibited priests not only from marrying a widow, or a divorced woman, or a slave, and from second marriage, but also from contracting marriage after ordination. The Synod of Ancyra, in 314, allowed it to deacons, but only when they expressly stipulated for it before taking orders. The rigoristic Spanish council of Elvira (Illiberis), in 305, went furthest. It appears even to have forbidden the continuance of nuptial intercourse after consecration, upon pain of deposition.¹ The ecumenical council of Nice, in 325, to anticipate this result here, proposed to make celibacy of priests the universal law of the Church, but was prevented by the protest of the venerable Egyptian bishop and confessor Paphnutius, who, though himself a strict ascetic,² and trained from his youth in an ascetic school,³ still foresaw, with true eye, the injurious moral consequences of such coercion. And thus the movement stopped for the present with the decrees of the Apostolical constitutions, forbidding marriage after ordination, without dissolving marriages contracted before it.

The Greek Church, after the seventh century, limited the law of celibacy to bishops, and made a single marriage the rule for priests and deacons; while in the Latin Church the ascetic principle, in connection with the interests of hierarchy, advanced as early as the fourth century to the absolute prohibition of marriage for the clergy, and in this way enhanced the official power of the priesthood, but by no means elevated its moral purity and dignity. For while voluntary abstinence, or such as springs from a special gift of grace, is honourable and may be a great blessing to the Church, the forced celibacy of the clergy does violence to nature and Scripture, and, all sacramental ideas of marriage to the contrary notwithstanding, degrades this divine ordinance, which descends from the primeval state of innocence, and symbolizes the holiest of all relations, the union of Christ with his Church. Much, therefore, as Catholicism has done to raise woman and the family life from heathen degradation, we still find, in general, that

¹ Can. 33: *Placuit in totum prohibere episcopis, presbyteris, et diaconis, vel omnibus clericis positus in ministerio, abstinere se a conjugibus suis, et non generare filios; quicunque vero fecerit, ab honore clericatus exterminetur.* Some, however, on account of the words *positus in ministerio*, would see here only a prohibition of sexual commerce at the time of the performance of clerical functions, as in the Jewish law; but this does not agree with the otherwise evident Montanistic and Novatian rigorism of this council. The *positus in min.* also seems to refer only to *clericis*, that is, in distinction from the officers just specified, to *subdiaconi* and other *ordines minores*.

² Ἀπειρος ὧν γάμου καὶ ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν γυναικός, says Socrates.

³ Ἀσκητήριου.

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in Evangelical Protestant countries, where the marriage of the clergy has become the rule, particularly in Germany, England, and North America, woman occupies a far higher grade of intellectual and moral culture, and the married life is *practically* regarded as far more sacred than in Southern Europe and South America.—*Schaff*.

XV.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE DOGMA OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.—This doctrine was not clearly developed, although it was generally realized, that the Lord's Supper was a most holy mystery, that the body and blood of the Lord were mystically connected with the bread and wine, and that thus those who in faith partook of this meat enjoyed essential communion with Christ. On this supposition alone can we account for the reproach of the heathen, who spoke of the sacrament as feasts of Thyestes. *Ignatius* calls the Lord's Supper a *φάρμακον ἀθανασίας*, and admits *εὐχαριστίαν σάρκα εἶναι τοῦ σωτῆρος*; *Justin* says: *σάρκα καὶ αἷμα ἐδιδάχθημεν εἶναι*. According to *Irenæus*, it is not "communis panis, sed eucharistia ex duabus rebus constans, terrena et cœlesti;" and, in consequence of partaking it, our bodies are "jam non corruptibilia, spem resurrectionis habentia." *Tertullian* and *Cyprian* also adopt similar views, while at the same time they represent, in some passages, the Lord's Supper rather as a symbol. *Clement* and *Origen* consider that it is the object of the Lord's Supper that the soul should be fed by the Divine Word.

THE SACRIFICIAL THEORY.—When once the idea of a priesthood (§ 51) had gained a footing, the cognate notion of sacrifice could not for any time be kept out. The Lord's Supper offered several points of connection for this view. First, the consecrating *prayer*, which was regarded of such importance as to give its name to the whole service (*εὐχαριστία*), might be regarded as a spiritual sacrifice; next, names derived from terms applied to sacrificial worship were given to those offerings which the congregation made for behoof of the Lord's Supper (*προσφοραί*, oblationes). And as

the congregation brought its gifts for the Lord's Supper, so the priest offered them again in the Lord's Supper; and to this act also the terms προσφέρειν, ἀναφέρειν, were applied. Ultimately, as the prayer, so the Lord's Supper itself, was designated as θυσία, sacrificium, although at first only in a figurative sense.—Kurtz.

XVI.

THE CATECHUMENATE AND THE DISCIPLINA
ARCANÆ.

THE few words of this confession of faith needed not, of course, to be communicated in *writing*. They were to pass into the heart of the catechumen—to pass from the living word into his life—to be expressed by him as the deep conviction of his heart. Was it wished to attach to this custom, which arose so naturally, of orally communicating the confession of faith, some higher meaning? The interpretation most readily presenting itself was, that the Christian doctrine should not come to men from without, through the medium of letters, but should be written in their hearts by the Spirit of God, and propagate itself there as a living principle (Jer. xxxi. 33).¹ In later times, a disposition to dip into mysteries quite alien from the spirit of the simple gospel—which disposition had first found entrance into the Alexandrian Church from her leaning to an accommodation with the pagan mysteries, and from the influence of the Neo-Platonic mysticism—gave to this custom the meaning, that the most sacred things ought not to be entrusted to writing, lest they should be produced among the uninitiated, and thereby become profaned;²—while yet the Scriptures, the holiest tradition of the divine, might come into the hands of every heathen; while the apologists felt no scruples in presenting before the heathen the inmost mysteries of Christian doctrine!

¹ So Augustin, Sermo 212: Hujus rei significandæ causa, audiendo symbolum discitur, nec in tabulis vel in aliqua materia, sed in corde scribitur.

² The like play and parade about mysteries, to which more importance came to be attached than they originally possessed, afterwards led to the invention of the obscure, vague, and unhistorical idea of a disciplina arcani, of which, from its very vagueness and want of foundation, men could make whatever they pleased.

This confession of faith was made by the catechumens at baptism, in answers to distinct questions.¹

With the oral confession of faith was also connected the avowal of a moral engagement. The transaction was looked upon in the following light: The candidate for baptism separated himself from the kingdom of sin, of darkness, of Satan, which, as a heathen devoted to his lusts, he had hitherto served, and came over to the kingdom of God and of Christ. He was now, therefore, solemnly to renounce all fellowship with that kingdom of which he had before been a subject. Giving his hand to the bishop, he solemnly declared² that he renounced the devil and all his pomps—meaning particularly by these the pagan shows, and things of the like nature—and his angels—an expression probably based on the notion that the heathen gods were evil spirits, who had seduced mankind.³ In accordance with the favourite comparison already alluded to, this pledge was regarded as the Christian's military oath—the *sacramentum militiæ christianæ*—whereby he bound himself to live and fight as a *miles Dei et Christi*.

This form of renunciation, which we meet with in the second century, should be distinguished from the *exorcism*, which could not have sprung so early out of the prevailing mode of thinking in Christian antiquity. It is true, the idea of a deliverance from the dominion of the evil spirit in a moral and spiritual respect, of a separation from the kingdom of evil, and of a communication by the new birth of a divine life, which should be victorious over the principle of evil, is to be reckoned among the number of original and essential Christian ideas; but the whole act of baptism was to be, in truth, precisely a representation of this idea. There was no need, therefore, that any separate act should still be added to denote or to effectuate that which the whole act of

¹ According to the most natural interpretation, 1 Peter iii. 21, has reference already to the question proposed at baptism. Ἐπερώτημα, metonymice for the pledge in answer to the questions. Tertullian, de corona milit. c. 3: Amplius aliquid *respondentes*, quam Dominus in evangelio determinavit. Again, Tertullian, de resurrect. c. 48, respecting baptism: Anima *responsione* sancitur. The council of eighty-seven bishops in the time of Cyprian, respecting these questions: "*Sacramentum interrogare*" (*sacramentum* is here equivalent to *doctrina sacra*). In a letter of Dionysius of Alexandria, cited in Eusebius, l. vii. c. 9: Ἐπερωτήσεις καὶ ὑποκρίσεις. Cyprian, ep. 76, ad Magnum, cites one of these questions: *Credis remissionem peccatorum et vitam æternam per sanctam ecclesiam?*

² According to Tertullian, de corona milit. c. 3—twice—first, before he went to baptism, perhaps on his first admission to the Church assemblies, next at baptism itself.

³ Ἀποτάσσεσθαι τῷ διαβολῷ καὶ τῇ πομπῇ καὶ τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ.

baptism was intended to denote, and to the believer truly and effectually to represent. The case was different with the form of renunciation. This, like the confession of faith, had reference to what the candidate was bound on his part to do, in order to enjoy the benefit of baptism. As in Christianity faith and life are closely conjoined, so the renunciation accompanied the confession. Hence we find in the second century no trace as yet of any such form of exorcism against the evil spirit. But the tendency to confound the inward with the outward, the inclination to the magical, the fondness for pomp and display, caused that *those* forms of exorcism which had been employed in the case of the energumens, or demoniacally possessed, should be introduced in the baptism of all heathens. Perhaps the fact also had some connection with this change, that exorcism, which in earlier times was a free *charisma*, had become generally transformed into a lifeless mechanical art, attached to a distinct office in the Church. In the apostolic constitutions, we find neither the one nor the other. The first unequivocal trace of exorcism in baptism is found in the acts of the Council of eighty-five or eighty-seven bishops, which convened at Carthage in the year 256.¹—*Neander*.

XVII.

VENIAL AND MORTAL SINS.

ALL were agreed in distinguishing those sins into which all Christians might fall through the remaining sinfulness of their nature, and those which clearly indicated that the transgressor was still living under bondage to sin as an abiding condition; that he was not one of the regenerate; that he had either never attained to that condition, or had again fallen from it—*peccata venalia*, and pec-

¹ The North African bishop, Cæcilius, of Bilita, goes on the supposition, by his vote in this case, that exorcism belonged essentially to the whole act of baptism. So, too, the votum of the fanatical Vincentius a Thibari, that the *manuum impositio* in exorcismo must precede the baptism of heretics. But from the seventy-sixth letter of Cyprian ad Magnum, the presence of exorcism in baptism generally cannot be proved. He is speaking there simply of exorcism in the case of energumens, and it is rather Cyprian's object to show that baptism is far mightier than exorcism. *Spiritus nequam ultra remanere non possunt in hominis corpore, in quo baptizato et sanctificato incipit spiritus sanctus habitare.*

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cata mortalia, or ad mortem. These terms they had derived from the First Epistle of St. John. Among sins of the second class they reckoned, besides the denial of Christianity, deception, theft, incontinence, adultery, &c.¹ Now it was the principle of the milder party, which gradually became the predominant one, that the Church was bound to receive every fallen member, into whatever sins he may have fallen—to hold out to all, under the condition of sincere repentance, the hope of the forgiveness of sin. At least, in the hour of death, absolution and the communion should be granted to those who manifested true repentance. The other party would never consent to admit again to the fellowship of the Church, such as had violated their baptismal vow by sins of the latter class. Such persons, said they, have once despised the forgiveness of sin obtained for them by Christ, and assured to them in baptism. There is no purpose of divine grace with regard to such which is revealed to us. Hence the Church is in no case warranted to announce to them the forgiveness of sin. If the Church exhorts them also to repentance, yet she can promise nothing to them as to the issue, since the power bestowed on her to bind and to loose has no reference to such. She must leave them to the judgment of God. The one party would not suffer that any limits should be set to the mercy of God towards penitent men; the other would preserve sacred the holiness of God, and feared that, by a false confidence in the power of priestly absolution, men would be encouraged to feel more safe in their sins.—*Neander*.

 XVIII.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES AND THE CANON.

THIS seems the fitting place to introduce a brief statement in regard to the canon, or inspired rule of Christian faith, which, during the two first or formative ages of the Church, was gradually established and ascertained, through the testimony of the Churches

¹ Homicidium, idolatria, fraus, negatio, blasphemia, mœchia et fornicatio. Tertullian de pudicitia, c. 19.

to whom the divine writings were addressed, and the anxious and discriminating investigations of Christian divines. The following excellent summary of a very extensive subject is from Schaff. For more full information the student is referred to Mr. Westcott's admirable work on "The New Testament Canon."¹

"The canon of the Old Testament descended to the Church from the Jews, with the sanction of Christ and the apostles. The New Testament canon was gradually formed, on the model of the Old, in the course of the first three centuries, under the guidance of the same Spirit, through whose suggestion the several apostolic books had been prepared. The first trace of it appears in the second epistle of Peter, iii. 15, where a collection of Paul's epistles² is presumed to exist, and is placed by the side of the other sacred books.³ The apostolic fathers, and the earlier apologists, commonly appeal, indeed, for the divinity of Christianity to the Old Testament, to the oral preaching of the apostles, to the living faith of the Christian Churches, the triumphant death of the martyrs, and the continued miracles. Yet their works contain quotations, generally without the name of the author, from the most important writings of the apostles, or, at least, allusions to those writings, enough to place their high antiquity and ecclesiastical authority beyond all doubt. The heretical canon of the Gnostic Marcion, of the middle of the second century, consisting of a mutilated gospel of Luke and ten of Paul's epistles, certainly implies the existence of an orthodox canon at this time, as heresy always presupposes truth, of which it is a caricature. The principal books of the New Testament,—the four gospels, the Acts, the thirteen epistles of Paul, the first epistle of Peter, and the first epistle of John, which are designated by Eusebius as 'homologoumena,' were in general use in the Church as early as the second century, and acknowledged to be apostolic, inspired by the Spirit of Christ, and therefore authoritative and canonical. This is established by the testimony of Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, of the Peshito, and the Fragment of Muratori,—persons and documents which represent in this matter the Church in Asia Minor, Italy, Gaul, North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. We may, therefore, call these books the original canon. Con-

¹ Cambridge: M'Millan.² Ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς.³ Τὰς λοιπὰς γραφάς.

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cerning the other seven books, the 'antilegomena' of Eusebius, namely—the epistle to the Hebrews,¹ the Apocalypse,² the second epistle of Peter, the second and third epistles of John, the epistle of James, and the epistle of Jude,—the tradition of the Church in the time of Eusebius, the beginning of the fourth century, still wavered between acceptance and rejection. There was a second class of antilegomena, called by Eusebius *νόθα*, consisting of several post-apostolic writings: namely—the catholic epistle of Barnabas, the first epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, the epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, the shepherd of Hermas, and the lost Apocalypse of Peter, and the gospel of the Hebrews; which were read, at least, in some churches, but were afterwards generally separated from the canon. The first express definition of the New Testament canon, in the form in which it has since been universally retained, comes from the North African synod, held in the year 393, at Hippo, the episcopal see of Augustine. By that time, at least, the whole Church must have already become entirely unanimous as to the number of the canonical books; so that there seemed to be no need even of the sanction of a general council. The Eastern Church, at all events, was entirely independent of the North African in the matter. The name *Novum Testamentum*,³ also *Novum Instrumentum* (a juridical term conveying the idea of legal validity), occurs first in Tertullian. This canon was currently divided into two parts,—the gospel and the apostle;⁴ and the second part into catholic or general epistles, and Pauline.

“As a production of the Holy Ghost and his inspired organs, the sacred Scriptures, without critical distinction between the Old and New Testaments, were acknowledged and employed against heretics as an infallible source of knowledge, and an unerring rule of Christian faith and practice. Irenaeus calls the gospel a pillar and ground of the truth. Tertullian demands Scripture proof for every doctrine, and declares, that heretics cannot stand on pure scriptural ground. In Origen's view,

¹ Which was regarded by some as canonical indeed, but not as a work of St. Paul.

² Which has the strongest external testimony, that of Justin, Irenaeus, &c., in its favour, and came into question only in the third century, through some anti-chillasts, on dogmatical grounds.

³ *Διαθήκη*, comp. Matt. xxvi. 28, where the Vulgate translates, “testamentum.”

⁴ *Τὰ εὐαγγελικά καὶ τὰ ἀποστολικά, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος*: instrumentum evangelicum, apostolicum, or evangelium, apostolus.

nothing deserves credit which cannot be confirmed by the testimony of Scripture.—*Schaff*.

XIX.

LITERARY OPPONENTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

BESIDES those authors referred to in a former article, who attacked Christianity from a Neo-Platonic point of view, its two most celebrated opponents in the literary sphere were *Lucian* and *Celsus*, who, however, both flourished at a period somewhat earlier. The former, who has been called the “Voltaire of Grecian literature,” and was the impartial foe of all religions alike, was born at Samosata in Syria in 130, and died about 200. He assails the Christian faith and its professors with the light weapons of wit and sarcastic raillery; and, while more serious writers, such as Tacitus and the younger Pliny, denounce it with indignant reprobation, as a “*prava et immodica superstitio*,” “*exitiabilis superstitio*,” “*inflexibilis obstinatio*,” he ridicules it as a simple absurdity. His chief polemical work of this kind is a satirical burlesque on the life and death of Peregrinus Proteus, a contemporary Cynic philosopher, whom he introduces first as a mean profligate, then a Christian confessor, then a squalid Cynic devotee, and finally, in the frenzy of vain-glorious display, throwing himself as a martyr of philosophy into the flames of a funeral pile at Olympia. The absurdities of the character are employed throughout as the vehicle of a broad caricature of the religious systems to which he successively attached himself.

Celsus flourished about the same time, and is described by Origen as an Epicurean philosopher—though the remains of his writings which have descended to us in extracts in the work of his great antagonist, indicate also a certain admixture of Platonic or eclectic views. His chief arguments against the Christian faith were such as the following: (1.) Certain gross calumnies against Christ and his disciples, circulated by the unbelieving Jews; (2.) Certain alleged inconsistencies and contradictions in the sacred writings; (3.) The alleged inherent absurdity of the Christian faith itself, and especially such doctrines as that of the incarnation, redemption, the resurrection of the body, the promise

of forgiveness and renovation to the vilest of the race ; (4.) The mean estate and illiterate rudeness of its professors, consisting mainly of slaves, mechanics, women, and children ; (5.) The morose and anti-social character of their doctrine and life. The Saviour he regarded as a mere magician and wonder-worker, who had learned the occult art in Egypt, and afterwards practised it amid the ignorant wonder of the multitude in his native land.

XX.

ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICES AND FORM OF WORSHIP
IN THE MARTYR AGE.

THE simple form of ecclesiastical life and worship, which we sketched as existing at the close of the apostolic age, gradually developed itself into a system at once more complicated and more imposing in the course of the succeeding period. Ecclesiastical offices were multiplied. To the three primary elements of the apostolic order—the presiding minister (whether bishop or presbyter-bishop), presbyters, and deacons (*ordines majores*)—were now added a host of inferior ministries (*ordines minores*), which, while subdividing the work of the Church, imparted increased pomp and state to her public services. There were the subdeacons,¹ with functions similar to those of the deacon, but of subordinate rank ; the lectors,² who read the scriptures in the congregation, and kept the sacred manuscripts ; the singers,³ who conducted the service of praise in the house of God ; the acolytes,⁴ whose business it was to attend immediately on the person of the bishop or presiding minister ; the exorcists, who took charge of and prayed over those supposed to be possessed by evil spirits ;⁵ and finally, the ostiarii,⁶ or door-keepers, who attended to the cleanliness and order, and the opening and shutting of the house of God.

Let us suppose ourselves, then, in one of those oblong buildings,⁷

¹ Subdiaconi, ὑποδιάκονοι.

² Lectores, ἀναγνώσται.

³ Cantores, ψαλτάι.

⁴ ἀκολουθία.

⁵ ἐνεργούμενοι, δαμονίζομενοι.

⁶ Or janitores, θυρωροί, πύλωροι.

⁷ The form of places of worship, previous to the age of Constantine, is not very certainly known, but probably already tended toward the shape and arrangement which became general after the peace of the Church. If we could rely on such subterranean churches as the one sketched on page 104, as having existed substantially in their present form during the Martyr Age, that would settle the question ; but so many changes were made in the Catacombs subsequent to the times of Constantine, that we cannot found confidently on this.

which from a very early period were destined to the purposes of Christian worship, on some sacred morning, in Alexandria or Carthage, during the days of Origen or Cyprian, and let us try to realize the scene which would then have presented itself to us. The first part of the solemn public service—that which was open alike to believers and to catechumens—is just about to begin, and the congregation is in the act of gathering. At the further or inner extremity of the edifice stands the simple communion-table, a light and movable structure, as indicated by the remains in the catacombs. Behind this, and placed between it and the wall, is the chair of the bishop or presiding minister, with other similar but lower seats arranged on each side around it, and destined for the presbyters and other inferior ministers. Into this sanctuary the sacred band now enter, robed in vestments of modest state, though as yet not differing much from those used on solemn occasions in civil life,¹ and take their appointed places around the sacramental board. The general body of the faithful are already assembled, and occupy the central part of the building, the males on one side and the females on the other, and await in silent prayer the commencement of the august work of the day; and then, finally, beyond this, in a part of the building separate from the rest, and next to the outer entrance, are the catechumens, inquirers, hearers, and persons under ecclesiastical discipline, who are permitted to hear the Word, and listen to a part of the public prayers, but not to mingle with the sacred flock or approach near to the Holy Table.

As the solemn service proceeds, we soon find that while presenting a certain measure of that stately march and dignity which a fixed and established order imparts, it is still, in its essential elements, identical with that of earlier times. A Psalm of the Old Testament (or perhaps of the New), sung, in the antiphonic manner of the Hebrew poetry, by the clergy and people together, and concluding with the doxology or hymn of praise to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; a solemn act of humiliation and confession; a canticle of the Old Testament or Christian hymn sung as before; then a lesson of Holy Scripture, first from the Old Testament, and then from the New; a sermon or homily, consisting generally of a simple explanation of Scripture and exhortations to Christian

¹ See Riddle's *Christian Antiquities*, pp. 352, 353.

faith and life; and finally, prayers for all sorts and conditions of men, partly audible and partly silent,¹ completed the first or public part of the service. *Ite missa est*, “go in peace,” or “see that no catechumen be present,” or some other customary form of dismissal, spoken aloud by the deacon, was now the signal for all strangers to withdraw and leave the baptized flock, the sacred brotherhood, and royal priesthood, in the presence of their Lord alone.

Then begins the great and peculiar service of the day, the eucharistic banquet, or holy communion of the believers with their Lord and with one another.

First, amid the hushed silence of the sanctuary, the sacred elements, contributed by the willing offerings of the people, are laid on the table, and are presented sometimes with appropriate words of dedication as an oblation of thankful praise to the Lord. Then followed² that touching ceremony already referred to, the sacred fraternal embrace or “holy kiss.” Then the voice of the minister is heard in words which are found in all the oldest liturgies, and which have evidently descended from very early Christian times,—

The Lord be with you all;

to which the people respond—

And with thy Spirit.

Minister. Lift up your hearts;

People. We have lifted them up unto the Lord.

Minister. Let us give thanks unto the Lord:

People. It is meet and right so to do.

This forms the preface or introduction to the great eucharistic prayer, which now follows in sublime and exalted ascriptions of praise to God, for the mercies alike of creation and of redemption, and especially for the one unspeakable gift of love; and closing generally with the *trisagion*, or song of the seraphic host:—

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth,
The whole earth is full of thy glory.

Then followed the general prayer for the “whole state of Christ’s Church,” consisting probably at first simply of the Lord’s prayer, with a few words of free and extemporaneous pleading,

¹ The minister announcing the subjects of prayer in succession, and then leaving a pause for the silent supplications of the people—the origin of the *bidding prayer* of later times.

² Or, in some churches, at an after stage, immediately before the act of communion.

but afterwards elaborated, in the several churches, into rich and impressive forms of supplication, in the manner following :—

We most earnestly beseech Thee, O thou lover of mankind, to be mindful of the one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, which is spread over the face of the whole earth : be mindful, O Lord, of all Thy people, the flocks of Thy fold.

Send down from heaven into our hearts that peace, which the world cannot give, and that of this world also.

Guide in peace the king, the armies, the commanders, the senate, the councils, the people, the neighbourhood, our coming in, and our going out.

O King of Peace, give us Thy peace; keep us in love and charity; be our God, for we know none besides Thee; we call upon Thy name: grant unto our souls the life of righteousness, that the death of sin may not prevail against us, or any of thy people.

Visit, O Lord, and heal those who are sick, according to thy pity and compassion; turn from them and from us all sickness and diseases; restore them to, and confirm them in, their strength. Raise up those who have lingered under long and tedious indispositions; succour those who are vexed with unclean spirits. Relieve those who are in prisons or in the mines, under accusations or condemnations, in exile or in slavery, or loaded with grievous tribute; deliver them all, for Thou art our God who loosest those who are in bonds, and raisest up those who are oppressed; the hope of the hopeless, the helper of the helpless, the lifter up of those who are fallen, the haven of those who are shipwrecked, the avenger of those who are injured. Give Thy pity, pardon, and refreshment to every Christian soul, whether in affliction or in error. And, O Lord, Thou physician of soul and body, heal all our infirmities both of soul and body: O Thou, who art the overseer of all flesh, watch over us and heal us by Thy saving health. Be a guide at all times, and in all places, to our brethren who are travelling or about to travel, whether by land or by water; whatever way they pursue their journey, bring them all to a quiet and safe port: be with them in their voyages and on their road, restore them to their friends, and let them receive each other in joy and health. Preserve us also, O Lord, in our pilgrimage through this life from hurt and danger. Send rain out of Thy treasures upon those places which stand in need of it; renew and make glad the face of the earth by its descent, that, bringing forth, it may rejoice in the drops thereof. Raise the waters of the river to their just height; renew and make glad the face of the earth by the ascent of them, water its furrows, and increase its produce. Bless, O Lord, the fruits of the earth, and preserve them incorrupt for our use, that we may sow and reap from them. Bless also, O Lord, and crown the year with the riches of Thy goodness, for the sake of the poor, the widow, the fatherless, and the stranger: for the sake of all us, who put our trust in Thee, and call upon Thy holy name: for the eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them their meat in due season. O Thou that givest food to all flesh, fill our hearts with joy and gladness; give us always what is sufficient for the relief of our necessities, that we may abound in every good work in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Give rest, O Lord our God, to the souls of our fathers and brethren, who are departed in the faith of Christ: be mindful of our forefathers from the beginning of the world, of the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, saints, just men, and the soul of every one who is gone before us in the faith of Christ.¹

¹ On the subject of such prayers for the rest and peace of the departed faithful, and the final consummation of their blessedness, which prevailed at least as early as the times of Tertullian, though without the Romish adjunct of purgatory, see Riddle, 421-37.

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Give rest to the souls of all these, O Lord our God, in the tabernacles of Thy saints ; dispense unto them in Thy kingdom those good things which Thou hast promised, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, which Thou hast prepared, O God, for those who love Thy holy name. Give rest to their souls, and vouchsafe them the kingdom of heaven : but grant unto us that we may finish our lives as Christians, well pleasing to Thee, and free from sin, and that we may have our portion and lot with all Thy saints. Receive, O God, unto Thy holy heaven and to Thy spiritual altar in the heaven of heavens, by the ministry of arch-angels, the eucharistical praises of those that offer sacrifices and oblations to Thee ; of those, who would offer much or little, privately or openly, but have it not to offer ; of those who have this day brought their offerings. Receive them as Thou didst the gifts of Thy righteous Abel, the sacrifice of our father Abraham, the incense of Zacharias, the alms of Cornelius, and the widow's mite. Receive their offerings of praise and thanksgiving, and for their earthly things give them heavenly, for their temporal, eternal.¹

Then follow the more peculiar prayers of consecration—the words of institution, the invocation of the Holy Ghost to descend in blessing on the people and the sacred elements, the Lord's prayer, and other breathings of supplication and adoration, with mutual benedictions of minister and people preparatory to the most solemn act of all.

Then amid the sound of holy hymns, such as “Glory to God in the highest,” or “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good,” or “Hosanna to the Son of David,” and which was sometimes continued during the whole time of receiving, the sacred elements were distributed, and clergy and people partook together of those mysterious symbols which were in very deed, to their faith and love, the body and the blood of their Lord.

A brief prayer of thanksgiving and parting words of salutation and blessing closed the service ; and while the congregation silently dispersed in the grey morning to their several homes, the deacons reverently carried a portion of the feast to the absent members in the sick-chamber or in the prison cell.

It is manifest from all the liturgical remains of that age, and other relative evidence, that while a general order or form of service, corresponding to that above sketched, everywhere prevailed, the particular words of prayer and praise were as yet unfixed, and varied in the different churches, and even in the same church from time to time. Every church had its own form of worship and its

¹ Probably a genuine part of the liturgy of Alexandria, as used in the days of Clement and of Origen. See Bunsen's *Analecta Ante-Nicæna*, vol. iii. pp. 24, 25.

own formularies of thanksgiving and of supplication, which were revised, enlarged, modified from age to age; while the intimate intercourse existing between the churches and certain primary elements of general tradition which they inherited in common, communicated a certain stamp and style of family resemblance to them all.¹

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XXI.

SYMBOLUM NICÆNUM.

A. UT A CONCILIO PRIMO ŒCUMENICO EDITUM.

A.D. 325.

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἓνα θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα, πάντων ὁρατῶν τε καὶ ἀορατῶν ποιητήν,

Καὶ εἰς ἓνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, γεννηθέντα ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς μονογενῆ, τουτέστιν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς, θεὸν ἐκ θεοῦ, φῶς ἐκ φωτός, θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ, γεννηθέντα, οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο τὰ τε ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα καὶ σαρκωθέντα καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα, παθόντα καὶ ἀναστάντα τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ καὶ ἀνελθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς καὶ ἐρχόμενον κρίναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς.

Καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα.

Additur formula anathematizans:

Τοὺς δὲ λέγοντας ὅτι ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν καὶ πρὶν γεννηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν καὶ ὅτι ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο ἢ ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας φάσκοντας εἶναι ἢ κτιστὸν, τρεπτὸν ἢ ἀλλοιωτὸν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀναθεματίζει ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία.

EUSEBIUS epist. ad Cæsareenses apud Athanasium de decretis synod. Nicæmæ. tom. I. i. pag. 239. Montfaucon.

¹ The above sketch has been based on such scattered hints and notices of the early Church worship as are to be found in the Ante-Nicene fathers, compared with those ancient liturgies, which, though greatly enlarged, interpolated, and corrupted in after ages, are yet in their general form and framework clearly traceable to the times of the Martyr Church. See, for much interesting information, Bunsen's "Hippolytus and his Times," and "Analecta Ante-Nicæna"—though this author's style of criticism, at once sceptical and credulous, stands specially in need of careful sifting.

B. UT A SYNODO CONSTANTINOPOLITANA, ADDITA DE SPIRITU
SANCTO DEFINITIONE, RECOGNITUM.

A.D. 381.

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DIX.

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἓνα θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα, ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς, ὁρατῶν τε πάντων καὶ ἀορατῶν,

Καὶ εἰς ἓνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ, τὸν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα πρὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώνων, φῶς ἐκ φωτός, θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ, γεννηθέντα, οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο, τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ σαρκωθέντα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα, σταυρωθέντα τε ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου καὶ παθόντα καὶ ταφέντα καὶ ἀναστάντα τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς καὶ ἀνελθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς καὶ καθεζόμενον ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ πάλιν ἐρχόμενον μετὰ δόξης κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς, οὗ τῆς βασιλείας οὐκ ἔσται τέλος.

Καὶ εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, τὸ κύριον, τὸ ζωοποιόν, τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον,¹ τὸ σὺν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ συμπροσκυνούμενον καὶ συνδοξαζόμενον, τὸ λαλῆσαν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν,

Εἰς μίαν, ἁγίαν, καθολικὴν καὶ ἀποστολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν

Ὁμολογοῦμεν ἐν βάπτισμα εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν,

Προσδοκῶμεν ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν καὶ ζωὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος.

Ἄμήν.

MANSI Act. Concill. tom. iii. p. 565.

¹ Add. et filio concilium Toletanum (sed non omnes codd.), Etherius et Beatus adv Elipandum L

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

APPEN
DIX
—

1. In what way did the ancient heathenism prepare the way for Christ?
2. Show the same in regard to Judaism.
3. Mention some circumstances in the general state of the world at the time of the Advent which favoured the introduction of Christianity.

PERIOD FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

4. State the relation between the ministry of the Baptist and that of Christ.
5. Whence were the earliest disciples drawn?
6. What was their number at the time of the Ascension?
7. Give an account of the miracle of Pentecost and of its effects.
8. Point out the chief characteristics of the Pentecostal Church.
9. What was its relation at first to the Jewish Temple and worship?
10. Trace its early progress in Jerusalem.
11. What event led to the dispersion of the disciples and the wider propagation of the faith?
12. State the circumstances of the baptism of Cornelius, and point out its significance.

CHAPTER II.

13. Describe Antioch, and show its fitness as the first centre of catholic Christianity.
14. How did the disciples probably come to be called Christians, and by whom?
15. Give the probable date of the first Christian mission.
16. Give a sketch of the life and missionary journeys of St. Paul, stating the leading dates.
17. State what is known of the latter years and labours of St. Peter.
18. What evidence is there for his having lived for a lengthened period in Rome, and held the office of bishop there?
19. Is anything known of the latter years of St. John?
20. What were the chief heresies of his day? Who were Cerinthus, Simon Magus, Dositheus, and Menander? and state what is reported as to their teaching.
21. State the two chief lines of heretical speculation at that time, and describe their distinctive character.
22. Distinguish the Nazarenes and the Ebionites.
23. State the legend concerning the labours of the other apostles.

24. What was the position of St. James at Jerusalem, and what is known of his history?

CHAPTER III.

25. What was the extent of the Church at the close of the apostolic age?

26. In what part of the world was it chiefly spread, and what were the leading seats of its strength?

27. What was at this time generally the social position of its disciples?

28. Were there any exceptions to this? What does Pliny say in regard to this?

29. Give a sketch of the constitution and organization of the Apostolic Churches.

30. What different views have been held in regard to the primitive form of Church government? State the points on which the controversy mainly turns.

31. Is anything known or probably inferred in regard to the psalmody of the Apostolic Church?

32. What were the characteristics of primitive preaching?

33. What remains of the Christian literature of that age, apart from the inspired writings, have come down to us, and what is their character and value?

34. What are the New Testament Apocrypha, and by what characteristics are they distinguished from the canonical writings?

35. What is the "Apostles' Creed?" Explain its origin and history.

PERIOD SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

36. What information have we of the progress of Christianity at the middle of the second century and at the beginning of the third respectively?

37. How does the Emperor Maximin speak of it shortly before the final peace of the Church?

38. What does Celsus say of the social position of the Christians, and to what extent was it true?

39. What were probably the chief causes or favouring circumstances which aided the progress of the gospel?

40. State the five secondary causes alleged by Gibbon in explanation of it, and show to what extent and in what sense they are well founded.

41. Mention some of the ways in which different classes of inquirers were drawn towards Christianity, and led to recognise its divine claims.

CHAPTER II.

42. State some of the circumstances which rendered a hostile collision between the Church and the Roman empire inevitable, and prevented the Christian religion from being recognised as one of the *religiones licitæ* tolerated by the State.

43. What old law of the Roman State was capable of being interpreted as precluding the toleration of the Christian Church?

44. State the purport of the correspondence between the younger Pliny and the Emperor Trajan, and define the points established by it as to the treatment of the Christians.

45. Which was the first persecution? What account does Tacitus give of it?
46. What was the condition of the Christians under Domitian? Mention some of the more remarkable sufferers under this reign.
47. What distinguished martyrs are reported to have suffered under Trajan?
48. What were the circumstances of the Church under Hadrian?
49. What was the most important event of this reign, as affecting the Jewish people and the Christian Church?
50. What was the character of Marcus Aurelius, and what was his policy towards the Christian Church?
51. Mention the chief persecutions of this reign, and name some of the more conspicuous martyrs.
52. Relate the legend of the thundering legion, and state to what extent it may be founded in fact.
53. Mention some of the leading sufferers in the persecutions under Septimius Severus at Alexandria and at Carthage.

CHAPTER III.

54. Describe the Catacombs of Rome, and state their supposed origin.
55. Give instances of the manner in which they throw light on the doctrine and life of the early Church.
56. What was the effect on the Church of the long peace which followed the death of Maximin the Thracian?
57. Under what emperor did the persecution again break out, and what was its character?
58. How did the Church at first meet the time of trial?
59. What were the means chiefly employed to overcome the constancy of the Christians?
60. Into what classes were the lapsed now divided, and how designated?
61. What course did Cyprian adopt on the outburst of the persecution, and how was it vindicated?
62. What distinguished martyrs suffered in the reign of Valerian?
63. What was the last Christian persecution? What was the date of its commencement? and what special feature distinguished it?
64. What account does Eusebius give of the sufferings of the Christians?
65. What led to the cessation of the persecution?
66. What was the date of Constantine's edict of toleration?

CHAPTER IV.

67. Name the chief fathers of the Martyr Age.
68. Give a short account of the life of Justin Martyr.
69. Name some of the other Christian apologists, and state the general character of their arguments.
70. Sketch the life of Irenæus.
71. State the origin and leading principles of Gnosticism, and name some of its chief sects.
72. Give some account of the systems of Basilides, of Valentinus, and of Marcion.
73. What line of argument did Irenæus employ against these heretics?
74. What other distinguished fathers wrote against the Gnostics?

APPEN-
DIX.

75. Give a sketch of the life of Origen.
76. What is the date of his birth, and what was the year of his appointment to the Catechetical School?
77. What distinguished teachers preceded him in that office?
78. What were the characteristic features of his theology, and how was it affected by the Gnostic and Neo-Platonic speculations of the age?
79. Give some account of the Neo-Platonic philosophy.
80. Explain the doctrine of the Logos, as taught by the Alexandrian divines, and indicate the sources from which it was derived.
81. What was the chief form of heretical speculation on the subject of the Trinity before the Council of Nicæa? What different shapes did the heresy assume?
82. Who were the Patripassians, and why were they so called?
83. What were the opinions of the Alogi, of Theodotus, of Noëtus, of Artemon, of Praxeas, of Paul of Samosata respectively?
84. Who was Sabellius, and what was his doctrinal system?
85. Mention some sources of obscurity in the views of the Ante-Nicene fathers on the subject of the Trinity.
86. State the characteristic differences of the Eastern and Western Churches, as embodied in the schools of Alexandria and of Carthage.
87. Give a sketch of the life of Tertullian, and name his chief works.
88. Explain the origin of the Montanistic movement, and describe its character. Point out its affinity to other religious movements in the third and fourth centuries.
89. What influence did it exercise on the Church?
90. How long did the sect survive in Carthage?
91. Sketch the life of Cyprian, and point out his connection with Tertullian.
92. Distinguish the schism of Novatus at Carthage, and of Novatian, showing the points on which they agreed and on which they differed.
93. What were the circumstances of Cyprian's contest with the Bishop of Rome? What were the questions at issue and the principles involved?
94. In what sense was Cyprian willing to concede a kind of primacy to the Bishop of Rome, and wherein did his view differ from that of the later Roman Church?
95. Explain his theory of the Catholic Church and the nature of schism.
96. Name his chief works, and particularize those which bear specially on the doctrine of the Church.
97. Who were Gregory Thaumaturgus, Julius Africanus, Pamphilus, Dorotheus, Lucian (of Antioch), Minucius Felix, Arnobius, Commodian, Lactantius? Where did they flourish, and for what were they distinguished?

CHAPTER V.

98. What were the chief characteristic virtues of the Church of the Martyr Age?
99. Under what aspect did they chiefly regard the Christian calling? and how did their views on this subject colour their ideas and language in regard to baptism, prayer, the sign of the cross, &c.?
100. What were the favourite religious symbols of this age, and how were they employed? Were images as yet used in public worship?

101. What reproach does Celsus cast upon the Christians in regard to this matter?

102. Mention some incipient signs in this age of a morbid ascetic tendency.

103. What were the prevailing views of earnest Christians in this age in regard to marriage, dress, intercourse with the world, &c.?

104. What questions of difficulty had arisen in regard to things in themselves indifferent, and in what way were those questions solved?

105. What special hours of prayer and sacred seasons were generally observed during this age?

106. What were the views of the Church of this period in regard to the sacraments?

107. Give a sketch of the disciplinary system of this age in regard (1.) to the admission of members, and (2.) the restoration of penitents.

108. What was the prevailing character of the religious teaching of this age?

109. State the views of the Martyr Church in regard to the atonement and redeeming work of Christ.

110. In what relation did the Christians of this age consider themselves as standing to the world and civil society? How did this affect their action in regard to public affairs and prevailing evils, such as slavery, despotism, &c.?

111. What views did the Christians of this age take of death and the grave, and how did their mourning for departed friends differ alike from stoical indifference and hopeless lamentation?

112. What were the birth-day feasts of the martyrs, and wherein did they tend to abuse?

SELECTIONS FROM CAMBRIDGE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.*

January, 1846.

1. What was there in the political state of Judæa favourable to the first propagation of the Gospel?

2. State the difference between the Eastern and Western Churches respecting Easter.

3. What was the Sabellian heresy?

4. By whom was the controversy respecting Easter carried on in the first three centuries? What was the conduct of the Bishop of Rome?

5. Who was Theodotus? Of what heresy was he the founder? Mention some of his followers.

6. Give the subject of Pliny's letter to Trajan, and of Trajan's answer. In what respect was Hadrian's reply to an application of the same kind more favourable to the Christians?

7. How far may Simon Magus be said to be the founder of the Gnostics? What were their tenets?

* The questions omitted are generally those identical with some already given. Some repetitions are still allowed to stand, as showing the *kind* of questions most commonly given. The Cambridge questions alone are given, as there is, so far as we know, no corresponding theological degree at Oxford or any of the Scotch universities.

8. Give an account of the Council held at Jerusalem, and of the decree which was there drawn up.

9. What is the date of the burning of Rome? What account does Tacitus give of the sufferings of the Christians as the incendiaries of the city?

10. Into what two sects were the Jewish Christians divided who remained in the neighbourhood of Pella after the destruction of Jerusalem; and what was the difference between their doctrines?

11. By whom was the Council of Nice convoked, and for what purpose?

February, 1846.

1. Who were the Apostolic Fathers? Give some account of the life and writings of Irenæus.

2. What instances of favour shown towards the Christians are recorded of Alexander Severus?

3. State the difference between the Eastern and Western Churches respecting Easter. What is the practice of the Church of England?

May, 1846.

1. Give a brief history of the Church during the first year of its existence.

2. Give some account of Clemens Romanus and his writings.

3. What were the tenets of the Manichæans?

4. In what sense were prayers offered for the dead by the early Christians?

November, 1846.

1. For what object was the Council of Jerusalem held? Who were present at it?

2. Give a short account of Polycarp.

3. What was the outward state of the Church in the reign of Commodus?

4. What charges were commonly brought against the Christians that gave rise to their persecution?

January, 1847.

1. Give an account of the Apostolic Fathers; state their extant writings, and any controversies that have arisen about the genuineness of them.

2. What were the tenets of the Montanists? Were they heretics or schismatics? By what other names were they known?

3. Give an account of the controversy arising out of the case of the lapsed.

4. Mention some of the early writers against Christianity, the nature of their arguments, and the authors by whom they were opposed.

5. By whom was the Church of Rome founded? What was the state of Christianity there previous to the death of St. Paul?

6. State what is known of the history of Simon Magus. In what sense can he be said to be the founder of the Gnostics?

7. Explain briefly the schism of the Donatists; and state the proceedings that were adopted against them.

8. Give an account of the life and writings of Cyprian.

9. By whom was the Church of Alexandria founded? What is known of the early state of Christianity there?

10. Who first broached heretical opinions on the Trinity? By whom was he opposed, and what name was affixed to his party?

11. Enumerate the early Apologists ; and what was the intention of their writings, and to whom were they addressed?

12. Give an account of the life and writings of Justin Martyr.

13. Give a brief account of those mentioned in the New Testament who bore the name of James.

14. Explain the origin and tenets of the Nazarenes and Ebionites.

15. Give a summary of the controversy on the baptism of heretics. How do you account for the rise of it?

16. When, and for what purpose, was the Council of Nice assembled? Mention its leading decrees, and the chief persons who took part in it.

February, 1847.

1. When did the Council at Jerusalem take place, and what were its decrees? Give the purport of St. Peter's speech.

2. Give a narrative of the revolt of the Jews under Hadrian, and explain the effect this had upon the early Christians.

3. What was the probable origin of the Gnostics? Explain their tenets generally, and those of the Cerinthians particularly.

January, 1848.

1. To what countries had Christianity extended at the time of St. John's death? What persons are mentioned as the founders of the principal national Churches?

2. What is the principle on which Trajan acted towards the Christians? Give an account of his correspondence with Pliny on the subject. What Roman laws could be made available for the punishment of Christians?

3. Give an account of the life and death of Polycarp, with dates. From what source do we derive our information concerning his death?

4. What was the peculiarity of Origen's method of interpreting Scripture? From what source did he derive it? Give an account of his life and of his principal works. What modification of the Grecian Philosophy took place about his time, and what effect did it produce on Christian Doctrine?

5. What were the distinctive tenets of Montanism? Mention the names of the principal writers against it.

6. Mention some historical facts of the first three centuries, which prove that the Bishop of Rome was not then regarded as Universal Bishop. On what ground did Cyprian give precedence to the Bishop of Rome when different Churches acted in concert?

7. Who propagated the first erroneous doctrines concerning the Holy Trinity? How far did they differ from those taught by Praxeas? What evidence have we that the Church held the doctrine of the Trinity in the second century?

8. What were the distinguishing tenets of the Gnostics? From what source were they derived? Trace the effect produced by the attempt to combine them with the doctrines of Christianity. Are these tenets noticed at all in the New Testament?

9. Give a short account of the life of Cyprian. What schism took place in the Church during his episcopate? What were the principal controversies in which he was engaged?

10. To what countries was the Christian Church extended during the

second and third centuries? What was the nature of the communion between the different branches of it?

11. What was the opinion of the Gnostics on the resurrection of the body, and how did they interpret what is said of a resurrection by Christians?

12. Mention the names of the most celebrated Christians who suffered martyrdom during the persecutions under Nero, Domitian, Trajan, and Severus. What was the kind of respect paid to the memories of martyrs as gathered from the account written by the Church of Smyrna respecting the death of Polycarp?

13. Give some account of the nature of the Patripassian heresy and of its principal supporters and opponents.

14. Who was Celsus, and where did he live? Give some account of the life and Biblical works of the author who answered his great work against Christianity.

May, 1848.

1. What accounts are given by Pliny and by Justin Martyr of the nature of the public worship of the Christians in the second century? What is the earliest notice of the Apostles' Creed?

2. Give a biography of Irenæus, with an account of his works. From whence is the Church of which he was bishop said to have been derived?

January, 1849.

1. Give reasons for the persecution of the early Christians, under the different forms which it at times assumed, from considerations both of what the heathen themselves were and believed, and of the belief and conduct of the Christians themselves.

2. Who was Cerinthus? With what noted individuals or parties was he connected in his false opinions? Wherein did he differ in some points from them? What did he teach?

3. Enumerate the epistles of Ignatius; state briefly their contents; and show what doctrines Ignatius must have held; and mention any practices of the early Christians which you think to have been illustrated by them.

4. What in the character or circumstances of the Emperor Decius induced his conduct toward the Christians in different parts of his reign? In what state was the Church found when his persecution began? What kind of persecution was it? Give instances of persons who suffered under it. What effect did it produce upon the Church both at the time and afterwards?

5. Can you mention any of the subjects which engaged the attention of the Council held in Africa, in the reign of Valerian, with Cyprian at its head? Of whom, and of what kind of persons, was this Council composed?

6. Give an account of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the safety of the Christians. How did the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Jewish polity affect the spread of Christianity?

7. Into what countries had Christianity penetrated at the end of the first century? Had it spread widely in those countries? And was its influence beginning to be seen on the institutions of the people, as well as in any way altering or modifying the opinions of the heathen themselves?

8. Give an account of the last journey and martyrdom of Ignatius.

9. How was the Emperor Valerian disposed to Christians in the early part of his reign? How and in what respects did his conduct to them change?

What happened to them in consequence in different parts of the empire? Give instances of the treatment which individual Christians met with in the latter part of his reign.

10. Where do the Fathers point as the source of Christian Gnosticism? Of what elements was that philosophy composed? Where did its professors chiefly resort in the second century? Give an outline of the Gnostic doctrines which were most widely held.

11. What circumstances attended the introduction and establishment of Christianity at Corinth? How was the integrity of the Corinthian Church disturbed? What is left of the writings of Clemens Romanus? Mention the other "Apostolic Men" from whom writings have come down to us.

12. What did the Christians maintain that brought down persecution from the Romans? Which of the Caesars took an active part against them? How came Pliny to be concerned with any Christians? Describe the course he took with regard to them, the grounds of his severity, and his testimony with regard to their morality.

13. Give a full account of the proceedings of the Christians at Alexandria up to the end of the third century; with short notices of the lives of their most celebrated teachers.

January, 1850.

1. Give a short sketch of the principal events in the life of St. Paul before his going with Barnabas to the Council of Jerusalem.

2. Mention some of the principal events which took place in the Church from the Conversion of St. Paul to the Council of Jerusalem.

3. Give an account of Paul of Samosata and his doctrines. By what Councils was he condemned?

4. Give a brief history of Tertullian, and of his opinions at different periods of his life.

5. Under what emperor did the first persecution against the Christians take place? and what eminent persons suffered in it? Mention some of the principal subsequent persecutions.

6. Give a brief account of the principal events in the life of St. Paul from the Council of Jerusalem to his martyrdom.

7. What is the account given of the conversion of Constantine, and what were its effects upon the Church?

January, 1851.

1. To what date do the historical books of the New Testament carry the history of the Christian Church? Mention some of the chief facts subsequent to this period which are to be gathered from the other books of the Canon.

2. By what emperor were authoritative instructions respecting the Christians first issued? Give some account of their tenor and general effect upon the Church.

3. Mention any circumstances which were likely to have been favourable to the early progress of Christianity,—(1) among the heathen; (2) among the Jews.

4. Give a short sketch of the life of Polycarp.

5. Mention the respective causes of the Meletian and Donatian schisms.

6. What is the date of the edict of Constantine in favour of Christianity? and what were the chief privileges accorded by him to the Church?

APPEN-
DIX.

7. Mention any circumstances which were likely to have been unfavourable to the early progress of Christianity,—(1) among the heathen; (2) among the Jews.

8. State what is known concerning Appollonius of Tyana. What arguments were drawn from his life during the second and third centuries?

9. Give some account of the state of the Church under Diocletian.

QUESTIONS FOR THE THEOLOGICAL DEGREE IN 1860–61.

October, 1860.

1. What traditions were current in the early Church respecting the latter part of the lives of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. John?

2. Mention the chief centres of the Christian faith, and give a sketch of the constitution and ritual of the primitive Churches at the beginning of the second century.

3. Describe the characteristics of the Catechetical School at Alexandria. Who were its chief representatives?

4. Who were the principal adversaries of Christianity during the second century? Give a short account of the Apologists during the same period.

5. Who was Novatian? What were his opinions? By what name were his followers distinguished?

6. Write a short account of Cyprian, and the chief controversies in which he was engaged.

7. By what natural causes was the progress of Christianity assisted or impeded during the first three centuries?

Easter Term, 1861.

1. What predictions or allusions occur in the New Testament respecting any heresies which were subsequently developed in the primitive Church?

2. What particulars may be gathered from the New Testament and the early Fathers concerning (1) The places, (2) The seasons, and (3) The forms of Christian worship in primitive times?

3. State what you know of the history of the Church in Alexandria, and of its leading Theologians in the second century.

4. Give some account of Marcion and his opinions.

5. State the views of Cyprian on the unity of the Church. How do they differ from those of the modern Church of Rome?

6. Give a sketch of the history of the Church during the reign of Diocletian, and trace the origin of his persecution.

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